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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THERE has been no decisive engagement in the Spanish war during the past week. The fall of Santander has not disheartened the Republicans; a new offensive has been started on the Aragon front, with Saragossa as its main objective. But the advance, though it has made ground at certain points, has not gone very far, and the rebels profess to be quite easy about Saragossa's ability to hold out. Meanwhile, the attacks on ships continue. The rebel air raid at Gijon last Friday did considerable damage to British merchant vessels as well as to Spanish Government warships—one of which, the *Jose Luis Diez*, has limped into Falmouth for repairs. In the Mediterranean destroyers and submarines "of unknown nationality" (but no one, even the Foreign Office, is really ignorant of the nationality) are active. A few days ago a Russian merchantman was sunk near Algiers, while on Wednesday a more daring attempt was made on H.M.S. Havock, and on Thursday the British S.S. Woodford was reported to have been torpedoed.

Indignation in France

Coupled with these exploits of the ships "of unknown nationality" are those of the troops of known—and now blatantly avowed—nationality. There is no longer any "hush-hush" about the Italians in Spain. Mussolini trumpets them to the world. He has exchanged congratulatory telegrams with the rebel commander-in-chief. There was an official announcement in Rome after the fall of Santander of the names of twelve Italian generals fighting on the Biscayan front. Lists were published of the Italian officers and men killed and wounded in what the Duce and his friend Franco call "the struggle against Asiatic barbarism" in Spain. It is no wonder that French opinion, which has long been chafing at the arrogance and aggression of Italy, should now be demanding an end to the farce. The French Government have decided to protest to the Non-Intervention Committee against Italian activities in Spain. If they get no satisfaction from this (and they can hardly expect that anything they say will induce the Roman leopard to change his spots), they may "resume their liberty of action" and throw open the Franco-Spanish frontier to the passage of volunteers. That would indeed have the merit of honesty and justice; how far it would go to redress the balance in favour of the Spanish Republic, it is not so easy to say. If France hesitates in the matter, we are told (and we scarcely need to be told what is so painfully obvious), it is because she is afraid of the British Government's disapproval.

The Far East

There has been heavy fighting this week at the mouth of the Yangtse and round Shanghai. The Japanese, profoundly suspicious of the Sino-Russian pact and with an eye on their own financial and economic difficulties at home, are speeding up operations. They aim, it is said, at a decisive victory by the end of the year. They took Woosung on Tuesday; but the Chinese have not, as many expected they would, fallen back from Shanghai; they are holding on there with a big force of 150,000 or more. Last week's attack by the Japanese on the British Ambassador was followed a day or two later by the bombing of an American liner by a Chinese plane. The Chinese Government immediately expressed their profound regret, without waiting for any protest from Washington, and promised to punish the pilot. The Japanese, on the other hand, still delay their reply to the British Note—and, if the rumours from Tokio are to be trusted, when they do reply it will be to say they are willing to apologise, but not to punish the airmen responsible for the outrage on the Ambassador, nor to give any assurance against the repetition of such attacks. And what is the British Government going to do then—or what is any other of the Western Powers who may, as the war intensifies, have a similar grievance, going to do? Nothing, by all present signs, that will matter very much to a victorious Japan.

Palestine and Partition

Some alarm has been caused by the recrudescence of murders—both of Jews and of Arabs—in Palestine this week. But according to the messages from Jerusalem this should not be taken to herald a new campaign of violence on a large scale. There is no evidence that the assassinations have been instigated or approved officially, and the Arab Higher Committee issued a manifesto on Tuesday deploring these outrages, and putting the blame for them (without any justification, so far as we know) upon the Jews. Meanwhile, the Partition scheme remains in the melting pot. No one is satisfied with the proposals in their present tentative form, and the opposition to partition in principle is strong and widespread among Arabs and Jews alike. But this negative unity promises no constructive agreement, so far as can be seen. What alternative is there which will be acceptable to both sides? The latest protest against partition comes from the Moslem Congress at Algiers, which wants the old political status retained, but with a Palestinian Parliament representing "a fraternity of Moslems, Jews and Christians." That would be excellent if it could be achieved. But what would this paper fraternity amount to when it came down to hard facts? Would the Arab brothers—in a majority in the Parliament—be any readier than they now are to concede the Jewish brothers' claims to bring in more immigrants, to acquire land, and in general to develop their National Home?

The Belgian Premier Under Fire

M. van Zeeland has weathered a good many storms in the two and a half years he has been at the head of the Belgian Government; that which he is facing to-day may blow him out of office next week. He has been bitterly—"slanderously," he says himself—attacked by the Rexist Party in connection with the National Bank, of which he was formerly a director. He admits to having received some money (amounting, according to his critics, to about £2,200) from the Bank since he became Prime Minister; but he repudiates the charge that there was anything illegal or improper in this. An extraordinary session of Parliament will be held next Tuesday, when the Deputies will hear M. van Zeeland's reply to his accusers, and will also have before them the result of the investigations into the affair, which M. de Man, the Finance Minister, conducted as soon as it came to his notice. There were many rumours early in the week of differences of opinion between the two, which would lead to M. de Man's resignation. But the probability now is, it seems, that it will be M. van Zeeland who will resign—even if Parliament next week gives him the vote of confidence that he will demand.

The French Railway Merger

The French railways problem has been solved by a compromise in the shape of a merger of all the systems into one National Railway Company, in which the State will hold 51 per cent. of the shares. Hitherto the State has owned two of the railways and has guaranteed the deficit on the other five, run by private enterprise. This financial burden, despite the pooling fund set up some years ago, has, since the 1930 slump, become increasingly and intolerably heavy. The accumulated deficit at the present time has reached the immense total of 27 milliard francs, and it has long been plain that drastic measures were necessary. The Socialists naturally wanted complete nationalisation; but the rationalisation promised by the new scheme will, it is hoped, be effective in achieving the necessary economies. (These will include, amongst other things, the co-ordination of rail, road and water transport.) The State's controlling interest is assured, and the mixed Board of the National Company will have a majority representing the public interest. The shareholders, who have been doing pretty well hitherto, are not going, it seems, to suffer under the reorganisation, though we have not yet got precise details of their future position. The railway employees will have four representatives on the board of thirty-three.

Malnutrition

A year or so ago we commented on the Interim Report of the League of Nations Mixed Committee on Nutrition, which was an exposure of the undernourishment of masses of the people in every country, and a call for prompt and resolute action to combat the evil. The Final Report of the Committee, which has just appeared, is the result of two years' work by a body of agricultural, economic and health experts, and it may fairly claim to be the most authoritative and comprehensive study of the problem that we have yet had. The main facts which it sets out—the wide extent of malnutrition and its evil consequences—are beyond dispute. As to the remedies there may be differences of opinion. But the Committee are surely right in insisting that the solution of the problem—or rather problems, of poverty and ignorance, of production and distribution, and prices and incomes—must be largely the work of national governments (though governments must beware of being too national). Considerable progress has been made in the more advanced

countries; but there is none, as the statistics show, in which far more strenuous efforts are not needed. Take, for example, the consumption of milk, the supreme value of which the Mixed Committee rightly stresses. Our own Government boasts of what it has done in this matter. But what it has done is miserably little—and it was a pretty irony that simultaneously with this Report last week there appeared the announcement of the Marketing Board to raise the retail price of milk in the coming year.

National Theatre

In a thundering article the Dramatic Critic of the *Times* has expounded the excellent reasons for regarding the resurrection of the National Theatre scheme as inopportune. The chief of these, as we have already suggested, is that the Vic–Wells is doing all that we could hope a National Theatre could do, and that the coterie of amateurs in control of the National Theatre scheme cannot be expected to compete in effectiveness with the experienced organisation of the Vic–Wells. Lord Lytton answers that there is no justification for the suggestion that there is any conflict of interest between the two organisations, adding with a curious naiveté: "The fact that I am chairman of both will afford sufficient evidence of this." Unfortunately, many of the most valuable supporters of the Vic–Wells find this evidence unconvincing. They even wish that Lord Lytton would make up his mind as to which of the two organisations has the prior claim upon his loyalty. For instance, if Lord Lytton, as chairman of the National Theatre, now issues a financial appeal on its behalf, he may endanger the success of the appeal which he has just issued as chairman of the Vic-Wells.

We continue to hope therefore that he will let the National Theatre scheme lie fallow a little longer. But according to the *News-Chronicle* the National Theatre Committee are about to choose an architect to build on their newly acquired site; and, furthermore, "a very eminent member of the older generation, a Royal Academician, has been mentioned as likely to receive the Committee's nomination." This presumably means Sir Edwin Lutyens. He is the most gifted architect in England, and the fact that he is Lord Lytton's brother-in-law is no argument whatsoever against his receiving the commission. But the question is not yet decided and the case for choosing the architect by open competition is also very strong. Incidentally, whoever gets the job will be up against a tricky problem. For Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth, the honorary secretary of the National Theatre Committee, has declared that the design will be "in keeping with the surroundings." And the surroundings include Victorian stucco houses, the German nursery-brick structure of the Natural History Museum, the baroque of the Brompton Oratory, the Edwardian opulence of the Rembrandt Hotel, and the illiterate façade of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is probably the worst public building to be found even in London. In the circumstances it might perhaps be better for the National Theatre to choose a design which was not in keeping with the surroundings.

Wide Horizons at Nottingham

Mr. Wells has always hated what he calls "hole-and-corner history," and it was natural that his address as President of the Educational Section of the British Association should be devoted to discussing what facts children in the twentieth century ought to learn at school to equip themselves as citizens of the world. Assuming an average school life of ten years, he argues that most of that time must go in acquiring elementary mathematical technique, languages and various drills, skills and arts, and concludes that so far as actual knowledge goes the child has to make do with something like "two hundred dozen hours." It follows that "a considerable austerity is indicated for us." We have no time for the "myths of the Creation, the Flood and the Chosen People" or the "criminal history of royalty, the murder of the Princes in the Tower, the wives of Henry the Eighth . . ." Instead we have our work cut out to teach the real essentials at their appropriate stages, world history, evolutionary history, biology, and, later, elementary economics and what Mr. Wells calls "personal sociology." Part of the problem, Mr. Wells sees, is to obtain teachers capable of the job. Houses have to be painted "outside every three years and inside every seven years, but nobody ever thinks of doing up a school teacher." Mr. Wells is certainly right about the sort of knowledge needed for world citizenship. But we are haunted by a prior question. Scientifically speaking, no one knows anything at all about education. We don't know what kind of education has what kind of result, whether the average child must not, for instance, reach the grand sweep of history, if at all, at a much later stage after a long familiarity with petty details of the kind Mr. Wells thinks largely waste of time. Nothing is *known*, though an infinite amount has been written about the minds of children and what to do with them. They remain unexplored and so far defying experiment.

The End of the Cricket Season

The County Championship has been of exceptional interest this season, not merely to cricket fans but to all the host of Englishmen who love a neck-and-neck finish. For a good many weeks past—since other "possibles," such as Sussex, Gloucestershire and Derbyshire, last year's champion county, fell out of the running—it was a toss up whether Yorkshire or Middlesex would come out top. Yorkshire's victory over Hampshire in their last match, and Middlesex's failure in their last match against Surrey, have settled it. Yorkshire's honour will not be grudged to them even by the keenest Middlesexites. They have proved themselves, on their record of games won and lost, just the better of two good sides, both of whom have played, with a few lapses, consistently and often brilliantly. It was a pity that the end of the season should have been blotched by the incident at Lord's on Tuesday, when the Surrey captain deliberately bowled wides and presented Middlesex with runs, in order to drive the total over the 200 mark, and so get a new ball (as is the custom after each 200 runs) which would give his bowlers a better chance of finishing off the innings in the short time that remained for play. There are precedents for this, and it is not against the laws of cricket. But it is "not cricket," and men of the tenderest and the toughest consciences are united in demanding that the law shall be altered.

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THE JAPANESE CHALLENGE

FEW steps for which the Foreign Office has been responsible in recent years have met with an approval so unanimous as its Note to Japan dealing with the aerial attack upon the British Ambassador's car. When one recalls the use that Mussolini made of an attack by unknown persons on Greek territory upon Italian officers of much less exalted rank to bombard and occupy Corfu, it shines by its moderation. But one might point to precedents set by Japan herself only a few weeks ago. The whole of her present operations in China, with their immeasurable tale of slaughter and devastation, arose out of two "incidents" incomparably less serious than this. It was obviously right to protest, not so much against the doubtless accidental outrage on the person of the Ambassador, as against the lawless brutality of an attack upon non-combatants. This civilised approach is, none the less, in such cases as rare as it is commendable. The demands, which wisely omitted the usual claim for compensation, can be met without humiliation by Japan. The reflection follows, none the less, that even if they are promptly and fully satisfied, the monstrous outrage out of which this incident arose will still darken our moral horizon. A shudder of indignant horror is felt in London and Washington, when bombs chance to fall on a main street of the International Settlement of Shanghai and on the deck of an American liner, or when the British Ambassador's car serves as target for a warplane's machine-gun. But these are minor details in a vast panorama of horror that ranges from the Great Wall to far Canton. A great part of Shanghai is in ruins, and under them lie thousands of Chinese non-combatants. Brief cablegrams report the bombing of one populous city after another; we watch it all, impassive and inactive, comprehending that this is the process by which China, in the Japanese Premier's phrase, is to be "beaten to her knees."

There are two ways in which civilisation would react to such stimuli as these, if it were still capable of coherent thinking. From Guernica to Shanghai, at two ends of the earth, it has now seen something of modern aerial warfare. The clumsy operations in the Far East are in their own way as horrible as the deadly accuracy and system of the German flying men who destroyed Basque cities to get iron ore. How much more are we to witness before we go back to the bungled, insincere tentatives of the Geneva Conference, and attempt again to abolish the whole menace of aerial warfare? "It cannot be done," our cooler reason answers, "without a powerful League; and between them the greater Powers have maimed the League."

Another line of thought is as inevitable and as useless. The operations that Japan is conducting in China horrify us by their lawlessness. For the second time in five years she is waging ruthless war upon a nation with which she is still nominally at peace. The triviality of her pretexts shocks us. The scale of her measures alarms us. But if we look frankly into our own records, is there anything new in her conduct? For a century past, the European Powers set her the example on which she now improves. It began with our own two Opium Wars. Episodes stand out like the burning of the Summer Palace in Peking, and the Kaiser's seizure of Kiaochow to avenge a missionary's death. If to-day Japan can easily overrun North China with her armies, it is because the Western Powers, after the Boxer Rebellion, claimed for themselves and extended to her the right to keep an army in this region. That was 37 years ago. In the interval, the Dynasty they humiliated has fallen, and it is with an effort that one recalls what the Boxer Movement was. The whole mind and structure of that ancient society have changed in these 37 years beyond recognition, yet to this right to make their invasion of the North perpetual, the Western Powers have clung. Those of us whose memories go back to the last years of the nineteenth century can recall how Lord Salisbury extorted concessions for the construction of thousands of miles of railways by a threat to use the British Fleet in Chinese waters. In those days it sufficed to address an ultimatum to the feeble Empire. To-day the Republic has grown so immeasurably stronger that it is necessary to land considerable armies and set aerial fleets in motion. But the ends are the same. The method is morally the same. The contempt for law and for the rights of the Chinese people is no grosser in Tokio than it was in Downing Street. The Western Powers could use a minimum of military force, since they followed it up with all their means of financial penetration. Japan, with her inadequate financial resources, facing a stronger and awakened China, must bring greater military forces into play. Never, though we made our League and even elected China for a period to its Council, did we clear away the obsolete vestiges of imperial lawlessness. Japan conquers where we penetrated, but she uses the bases and the precedents that we provided, first for ourselves, and then for her.

In this case, as in that of Spain, we have now to ask ourselves whether lawlessness can rage within a limited geographical area, without involving others in its vortex. No more than the Spanish Republic, fighting doubtfully for its life, is China a Power that attracts allies. Yet in this dark hour the conclusion is announced of a pact that binds Moscow to Nanking. It is, to be sure, on the face of it a negative agreement. It is merely a mutual pact of non-aggression. Since China lacks the means and Russia the will to indulge in aggression, its literal text means little. It is, however, a gesture that may have great significance. Until the other day Nanking made a virtue, in its dealings both with Japan and with the Western Powers, of its implacable hostility to Communism. It waged perpetual civil war against the Chinese Soviets, and its relations with Moscow were cold to the verge of hostility. This pact, concluded at this moment, may reflect a decision to end the civil war, and even to construct a sort of Chinese People's Front against Japan. The suspicion that the parallel goes farther is natural enough, and it may be that there are secret clauses which provide for something more than benevolent neutrality in the event of an aggression against either party. Will Russia help China with 'planes and tanks, as she helped Spain?

That is conceivable, and the French newspaper that reports it may possibly be well-informed. In that event two equivocal alliances confront each other in the Far East. The German-Japanese alliance was not explicitly directed against Russia as a Power; it was on the surface aimed only at the Communist International. The Sino-Russian Pact is not an alliance in any sense of the word, nor has it a "point" against any Power, still less against any doctrine. But only a very simple student of affairs

could fail to see in both these agreements the first stages of two *rapprochements* that may one day lead to military action. If ever Germany and Japan should decide for their own imperialist ends to strike together at Russia, they will, doubtless, give to their operations the appearance of a crusade against Communism. If Russia ever finds herself the object of such an attack, it will be a help to her to enjoy the collaboration of the Chinese. They have unlimited man-power; their troops have endurance and courage, and lack only equipment and good leadership to be a match for the Japanese. These two defects the Russians could supply. It may be significant that Marshal Blücher, who is now, since the recent purge, the ablest surviving general of the Red Army, won his laurels in China. Moscow, on this conjectural reading of the Pact, may be following a preventive strategy in China. If she can help the Chinese armies to make an effective resistance to Japanese aggression, the risk of the concerted German-Japanese attack on herself, which is her nightmare, may be averted. Indirectly, cautiously, with armaments rather than with armies, she may, in China as in Spain, defend herself against a future "Fascist" attack. In so doing she would also be fighting the battle of the Western democracies.

"SWABIA SALUTES THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN"

"WE have no butter: they order us about like cattle. Good! For our Fatherland we will sacrifice all." The old lady cackled on in the Wirtschaft of Nusplingen high up on the Swabian Alps. But then, as her family apologetically explained, she was cracked and thought she was living before the war. The Swabians are tolerant even of madness.

If Württemberg is the most democratic state in Germany, its Swabian inhabitants are the most sympathetic of all the Germans. Catholic, Protestant or Jew, they are individualists and, except for Hegel, anti-Prussian to a man. Here, if anywhere, you might expect a real opposition to Nazism. Württemberg had nothing to gain by the revolution, and just as in 1918 all the party leaders bade a fond farewell to the monarch they had expelled, so in 1933 the conversion to Hitler was half-hearted. Even the advantages of anti-Semitism were unappreciated. As a manufacturer said to me: "When I have to choose between one of our own Jews and a damned Berliner, give me our own Jew every time." There, as in Baden and the Rhineland, Nazism was the creed of the disgruntled, the bankrupt farmer, the discredited journalist, the expelled Trade Unionist; and in the early days only those with a grudge against the existing order joined the Party. And so when "the day" came, Swabia suffered more than its share of brutality and private revenge. For whereas in other parts of Germany some at any rate of the decent elements had been attracted to the Party, here the victory of Hitler meant that the pariahs had come to power. Let anyone who believes that democracy by its own inert decency can stop Fascism study this example. He will find that peacefulness and humanity only worsened the plight of South Germany. I shall never forget the police officer who said to me in the open street, "What can we do against the swine? Here we have always tried to behave like gentlemen, but now we can't protect people against the secret police—bloody Prussians." His openness with a stranger is typical of the country, and I only hope he still retains his job. But I fear that his charming honesty is a very ineffective defence against the Nazi machine. And yet in many ways he is representative of the opposition in South Germany at its most courageous. The fourth year of Nazism sees the people still devoted to Hitler, still proud of his destruction of Versailles, still hating Goebbels and always in present fear of some savagery or gross corruption on the part of the local boss. Approval is unified into national hysteria, opposition splintered into local feuds. While everyone has much to criticise, no one fails to approve of something; and since it is more repaying to express approval publicly, the net result is a people of "yes-men," each harbouring a private grudge in the cupboard at home.

This duplicity of temperament increases yearly. The stranger is greeted with an automatic stream of propaganda about the Four Year Plan and the shortage of raw materials caused by a hostile world. But this year the hose is shut off at once when it is seen that the stranger knows too much, and an awkward hesitancy falls on the conversation. Finally someone takes him by the arm and whispers, "Tell me, how many Germans are there in Spain?" The stranger replies, the grip on his arm is relaxed, and an adult citizen of an educated nation slips away with a look on his face like that of a child who has learnt a new dirty story and gained prestige among his fellows. Such incidents—they must have happened to me scores of times this summer—mark a new phase, the recognition by the general public that it knows nothing. "Don't talk politics to us," a bank clerk said to me, "we are a de-politicised people. We know we can know nothing, and anyhow knowledge is dangerous here." The Swabian, feeling he is doped with propaganda, has insulated himself from politics. And yet he can't conquer his curiosity. Hence the curious feeling that political truth is of no political significance, is in fact a dirty story, a private satisfaction of an impotent private desire.

This feeling is well-nigh universal. Four years have sufficed to destroy the revolutionary political movement. The flags are down, the uniforms have dwindled, the S.A. is gone from the streets, the S.S. is a mere pretorian guard. Germany has become a pure authoritarian state with a small ruling class of officials and a vast subject people. Outside the official class, all political distinctions have vanished. A farmer's answer to my question if he was a Nazi summed up the situation: "In a sense we're all Nazis now; but in another way, none of us are, since it doesn't matter what we think—in private. It's all right being political when you're young, then everything is fine. But when you've a wife and children you soon lose enthusiasm and think about the donations you must pay." But the revolution has left its traces. The new ruling class is very different from the old, containing within it men from every stratum of the people; and the subject people includes more intelligent and cultured men and women than any in the whole world. For it is the intelligent of all classes who are de-politicised. To remain an active Nazi to-day a German must retain or artificially induce the hysterical obedience of the pubescent convert to religion. If he cannot do this, he sinks into the cynicism of premature old age. There is no third alternative. When childhood is over (and children still have the best of life) he cannot throw off childish things without losing his political faith. National Socialism is not designed for the adult, but for the permanently adolescent mind. And so in all classes you meet a new form of political quietism which sees through the idiocies of the regime but recognises its impotence against it, and confines its opposition to funny stories.

This attitude is particularly noticeable among the peasants. To speak of them as an opposition is ridiculous; they are too hopeless for that. To the stranger they are surly, doggedly denying that there are eggs, milk, butter or cheese in the village. But when they are sure that you are no *agent provocateur*, their generosity knows no end, and as they load you with good things they repeat sadly, "We have to hoard; it's worse than the war; all work is compulsory now: they take everything from us." There is no actual starvation, but the peasant believes that there is; and the new rye bread with its admixture of maize is not only unwholesome but a permanent reminder of war.

War indeed is in everyone's mind. Even if you work in the world's largest accordion factory like one of my friends, you

cannot mistake the meaning of the boom which accompanies the second Four Year Plan. "No cream, bad bread, butter prohibitive—isn't that war?" he asked, "and what's more we all know we can't win." The contrast with the feeling of even a year ago is astounding. Then everyone believed that Hitler meant peace; now Spain and the Four Year Plan have destroyed that illusion too. The only advocate of war whom I met was a young pastor from the Ruhr, just out of prison for his oppositional activities, who shouted at me that he was in religious not political opposition. "Hitler has saved Germany from Bolshevism, and now we must rescue the three and a half million Germans in Czechoslovakia from the Russian yoke. Make no mistake, my friend, Niemoeller approves Hitler's foreign policy 100 per cent. and we of the opposition are as good patriots as the Nazis." But the pastor was only there on holiday. In Swabia he would have found little support—and no opposition.

But if what I have said is a fair picture of South Germany to-day, why is there no sign of a real opposition? Partly the answer is to be found in the power of the Nazi machine, partly in the youth organisation and partly in the anti-state liberalism of the people, which lumps all politicians together as hopeless. But more important than all these I believe is the K.D.F., which arranges the mass holidays of German workers. I happened to be present at a *Festabend* in a small mountain town. Here were three hundred Düsseldorf workers drinking and singing and dancing with the young men and women of the place. One of the locals said to me, "Fine, isn't it? Since K.D.F. came we have got to know people from all over the country. They don't come just on holiday—*they visit us.* The bosses pay most of it, and we feel we are a real community. That didn't happen in the old days." K.D.F. may be Fascist dope, but it is certainly popular and it is almost the only thing in Germany which is non-political and really democratic. It brings a value into life which cannot be measured against a scientific standard of living, and it makes people forget political disgruntlement and rising prices. With the Children's Holiday Movement it must be reckoned one of the solid successes of the Nazis. The tourist who returns from Germany saying that ordinary people are quite happy under Hitler, is not wholly wrong. In spite of the Four Year Plan, the local bosses and Dr. Goebbels, the non-political masses feel they have gained something; and refusing to think further, they are content to grumble at the tyranny and enjoy K.D.F.—an illogical but intelligible attitude for anyone who does not wish for political martyrdom. After all, for the vast majority of mankind, taking part in politics is a nuisance which has very little concrete result. Having resigned this boring privilege, the Swabian prefers to talk about the positive benefits of the new regime; and as for the inconveniences, they might have been as bad under any Government—since the war!

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

P.S.—In the course of three weeks I saw just two Jews in the streets.

A LONDON DIARY

EXCESSIVE longevity is one of the aims of American super-millionaires, and a surprising number attain it. Andrew Mellon looked like challenging John D. Rockefeller; no American thinks that Henry Ford can die before 90. The Mellon empire is centred in Pittsburgh—a multiple dictatorship of the city and its services, its press, University and Government. I remember staying in that empire for some days once, some fifteen years ago, in the house of one of Mr. Mellon's friends. They discovered that I had read the exhaustive report of the great Pittsburgh Steel Strike, which revealed the ghastly labour conditions and the vast spy system by which the empire was held together. I found my hosts extremely polite, charming and willing to take me anywhere—except, curiously enough, to the mills, where I might have got into contact with actual working conditions. I was, of course, taken round the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research. I asked if any disinterested research was ever done there. I was told that that had not been known, the point of the research being to increase dividends. (I gather that there may now be some argument about whether the Institute ranks as the sort of charitable organisation which can receive the enormous sum of money left to it by Andrew Mellon without paying income tax on the bequest.) I have heard it said that Andrew Mellon, slim, good-looking, immaculately tailored, was the perfect type of American magnate and, as such, incapable of losing his temper. It is true that he was surprisingly difficult to ruffle—even when his letters searching for ways of evading income tax were produced unexpectedly during the Senatorial inquiry. Like other millionaires, he provided his family with a suitably expensive church. When we think of that church, add to it the slavery and horror of the Mellon mines, recollect that he made countless millions and was proved to have defrauded the United States Treasury while its Secretary, it is surely clear that Mr. Mellon's longevity was excessive.

* * *

The godliness of capitalists was the point that particularly interested Elie Halévy, the French historian of England, who died last week. His books—the volumes on Bentham and English Radicalism, the three volumes on early 19th century England, and the last two on the pre-war period—were not nearly so well known to the general public as they should have been, but their influence through more popularly written histories was immense. Halévy's particular thesis was that everything was apparently ripe for a social revolution in England during the Napoleonic period, that there was no police to prevent it, nor indeed anything to account for the passivity of the working class in face of the most extreme suffering except—the evangelical revival. Wesley, he would have argued, saved the British ruling class from civil war, and I remember a correspondence I had years ago with Halévy in which he ended up by triumphantly pointing to the significant fact that the leader of the Labour Party (then Mr. Ramsay MacDonald) was no intellectual rationalist, but a Nonconformist at the head of a still predominantly Nonconformist party. It was a typical argument to have with Halévy, because he knew historically more about England than almost any Englishman, and was always intensely interested in relating this historical knowledge to current English politics, which he had been following in almost yearly visits to England for a generation and more. Politically, Halévy is properly to be classified as a Liberal; the last time we met, not many weeks ago, he was perplexed by the difficulty, particularly in France, of defending either mental integrity or humanity in face of the Nazi challenge.

* * *

I have just been looking at the latest item in the code which the Nazis have framed for the persecution of the Jews in the German Reich. Jewish publishers and booksellers are now required to confine their activities to Jewish literature and to an exclusively Jewish clientèle. "Jewish literature" is defined, in a circular letter from the Minister of Enlightenment and Propaganda, as "books and writings, whether in German, Hebrew, Yiddish or any other language, whose authors, editors or collaborators are Jews." Other works may be sold only with special permission—which, one may hazard a guess, will be very "special" indeed. As regards the sale of literature "of general Jewish interest, but of non-Jewish authorship—e.g., scientific works in the field of the theology of the Old Testament, archaeology, philology, world economy, permission *may in isolated cases be obtained* by written application to the Special Commissioner" (our italics). Nor do the restrictions end there; there are further limits on the freedom of the pariah publishers in this literary ghetto. For it is laid down that they "must obtain in advance the express consent of the Special Commissioner for the publication of every work. Before printing, the MS. must be handed in together with a copy or two corrected proofs of the work for the purpose of examination and sanction, and proof must be

furnished to show that the author is a Jew." Finally—in the interest, no doubt, of true "enlightenment"—"lending libraries under Jewish enterprise are forbidden, whether conducted solely as such or in connection with a Jewish book-seller."

* * *

I wonder whether Mr. Hore-Belisha, in considering current discouragements to recruiting, has noticed that soldiers and sailors are now almost the only adult people compelled to go to church on Sundays? Prisoners can be excused chapel, though most of them in fact welcome it, if only as a change from the daily routine. But I suppose prison warders have to go to look after the prisoners, just as public schoolmasters are compelled to attend chapel to keep an eye on the boys. (Graham Wallas used to recall his dismissal from Highgate Grammar School as a young man because he was too honest a rationalist to take boys to school chapel.) Apart from a few such exceptions, soldiers and sailors are, I think, now alone in having to conform to the Elizabethan rule about church attendance. A friend recalls that at the beginning of the last war his Colonel got so annoyed at the variety of religions professed by members of his battalion, that, after sorting out the C. of E.s and R.C.s, he divided all the others into two groups, the "ists" and the "ans." Thus Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists (and presumably Seventh Day Adventists and Christian Scientists?) were dispatched to one parade and Wesleyans, Presbyterians and Swedenborgians (if there were any) to another. This was an ingenious division, which would even account for an occasional Buddhist or Mohammedan, but which makes no provision for a Hindu, an Irvingite or Plymouth Brother.

* * *

General Crozier would have been furious at the patronising evasions of the *Times* obituary notice of him. What business has the *Times* to say that "In kindness to him his last book, *The Men I Killed*, which appeared last month, is best forgotten"? It said clearly what Crozier wanted this generation to understand. After a lifetime of fighting he wanted to tell people that the horror of war lies not so much in its suffering as in its indiscriminate stupidity; he wanted people to know that it had been his duty as a much decorated and very brave soldier (which even the *Times* admits him to have been) to shoot his own men as well as the Germans. Such things happen in war. The *Times* also slurred over the facts about his retirement. He left the Army (thereby just forfeiting his pension) because he insisted on punishing British looting in Ireland during the black-and-tannery period, and was overruled by the British Command which did not then apparently mind what was done to the Irish or what happened to the morale of the British Army. The *Times* also says that Crozier "became a professional lecturer and writer for the League of Nations," and says nothing about the fact that he was a strong opponent of the League of Nations, who during the last period of his life spent his entire time working with Dick Sheppard on the Peace Pledge Union. During the last years of his life Crozier put the whole of his tough fighting energy into building a movement to fight all war. I suppose the *Times* objects to facing the fact that war experience may make a man a pacifist. It would still like to pretend that pacifism is a synonym for cowardice.

* * *

Mr. Park was standing under a tree loaded with codlings. The ground was strewn with them; they are a soft apple and the birds like them. Mr. Park remarked that if he had his way he'd have all the birds "done away with." "People like Lady Astor, who get Acts of Parliament through about things like that, ought not to be allowed to have anything to do with government at all." I ventured a remark about slugs, snails and caterpillars eating everything if there were no birds. Yes. He approved of wrens—wonderful to watch them at work on the green fly—and goldfinches and linnets and some of the other small song birds. But he'd put poison down for the sparrows, and as for the blackbird, "that's a bird that's better dead." The bullfinch was just as bad, and the jackdaws and such like were no good to anyone, and people like Lady W. up at the big house ought to be made to pay £5 a year to everyone with a garden round about to make up for not keeping the jackdaws down. "They are just vermin, and the reason why there are so many more birds now is that the gamekeepers used to keep them down. To-day the sort of bird that does get killed off is the wrong sort. Nine times out of ten, if you watch a sparrow-hawk, it's a mouse, a mole or something of that he has in his claws, and that's all to the good, but the sparrow-hawk gets shot. No, there ought not to be any laws protecting birds—he'd never be able to grow anything if he didn't kill the sparrows . . ." And if I didn't agree that was because I didn't have to make my living off the land.

* * *

In lieu of a competition for "Adventurous Holidays," I offer this conversation overheard in Holborn last Wednesday:

Barmaid: "Been your holiday yet?"

Florid Gent.: "Rather. Southend. Went to the end of the Pier five times. On different days, of course."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to G. E. F. C.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

The Ramsey (Isle of Man) Stipendiary Magistrate held in a case before him yesterday that by joining with hotel customers in singing songs, Elizabeth Morris, landlady of the Victoria Hotel, Ramsey, had committed an offence.

The magistrate, Mr. T. P. Melly, said that by singing herself the defendant had abandoned the neutral attitude which would have kept her within the law. As it was she had provided an entertainment in the hotel when not so licensed, and he fined her 10*s*.—Reported in *Manchester Guardian*.

Bob bowed, smiled and waved to them, and finally threw the cigarette-end which he had been smoking over the balcony outside the window into the street below.

Instantly the girls flung themselves across the road in front of oncoming cars and fought madly among themselves as to who should get the piece of the coveted cigarette which had touched Bob Taylor's lips.

In the end only a few remnants of tobacco and cigarette paper were carried away in triumph by the few who were strong enough to keep them.—*Sunday Pictorial*.

At Cudham recently a Gift Day was held after much prayer, in the hope that the debt on the Church Fund might be cleared off in consequence. The amount required was £29 2*s*. 5*d*., and the result was £29 3*s*. 8*d*., showing how exactly at times our gracious God answers the prayers of His people, sometimes beyond, sometimes below their expectations; but always "He doeth all things well." *Laus Deo!—Church Intelligencer*.

The Month's Thought.—Every year the nation spends £240 million on liquor. A battleship costs about £6 million, so that every year the value of 40 battleships is consumed in drink. The former often destroys, the latter always defends us. The first is usually for oneself, the second is for us all.—*Oswestry Deanery Magazine*.

"I thrashed him until he could not stand. He will remember it for many a long day," said the father of a thirteen-year-old Stockport boy at Stockport Juvenile Court yesterday when the boy, with another aged fourteen, was accused of being on enclosed premises with intent to commit a felony.

The Chairman (Mr. William Bateman): We are very pleased that you saw fit to thrash your son for committing this offence.—*Daily Mirror*.

One man toured the exhibition seeking a battery set which would give enough volume to enable him to hear the B.B.C. programmes when using the lawn-mower at the end of the garden.—*Daily Telegraph*.

GOOD FELLOWS

"IN the last analysis," says Lord Horder in his new book, *Health and a Day*, "we are mostly good fellows with similar needs and probably with similar destinies." Mostly good fellows—that, I thought, was a fine piece of news, and I took up the morning paper in the hope of finding confirmation of it. The Shanghai correspondent was a little damping. The fellows out there might be mostly good, but they appeared to be killing each other without caring much whom they killed so long as they killed somebody. Correspondents in Spain were not much more encouraging; even those who believed that the Spaniards are mostly good fellows seemed to agree that the minority of bad fellows were temporarily having the best of it. Neither from Germany nor from Italy did the news suggest that an epidemic of good fellowship had suddenly broken out; and one gathered from the Moscow correspondent that in Russia nearly everybody who is anybody has become a wrecker deserving of capital punishment.

In England itself the news was no more exhilarating. If Englishmen are mostly good fellows, they undoubtedly run down an extraordinary number of men, women and children on the roads. Here and there one of them is reported to have given a large donation to charity; but, to judge by the space devoted to them, blackmail is more widespread than charity. Then there are strangling, share-pushing, and the confidence trick. Surely, if we were mostly good fellows, the newspapers would give us a little more evidence of this outside the sporting columns.

It is an old commonplace, however, that good news as a rule is not so dramatic as bad; and I doubt whether any paper that confined itself to reporting the doings of good fellows would last long. Even as regards fiction, how hostile people become to a novelist who chooses his characters from among the good fellows! Many people, I agree, read these books about good fellows in secret, but how the critical despise them for it! "Sickly sentimentalism," "pap," "false to life," "prostitution of Art"—such is the wordy reception a novelist is likely to get from the best people if he writes in praise of the good fellows. I must say I am reluctant to read a novel about good fellows myself. I regard my friends as good fellows, but I should not like to read a novel about them unless their characters were blackened or they were held up to ridicule. They are fascinating in real life, but, in so far as they are good fellows, they are not good enough for fiction. It is, of course, possible to introduce an occasional good fellow into a novel as a character, but it requires great will to make him interesting if he is also entirely surrounded by good fellows. As a result, novelists are compelled to endow their characters with a far higher proportion of vices than men and women are endowed with in life. Sir Andrew McPhail—in an essay that I wish he would republish—once compiled some remarkable statistics of the vices of characters in modern fiction; and the statistics certainly did not suggest that the characters are mostly good fellows. Sir Andrew concluded that the modern novel does not hold the mirror up to nature. Lord Horder would presumably agree with him.

I myself keep a lazy hold on a kind of good-fellow philosophy; but what I cannot make out is why, if we are mostly good fellows, we so often allow the bad fellows to get on the top. "Ye are many, they are few," said Shelley to the workers; and, if Lord Horder is right, the line might as appropriately have been addressed to the good fellows. "Rise like lions after slumber"—the trouble with the good fellow, unfortunately, is that he is usually less like a lion after slumber than like a lion that has just been given a sleeping-draught. He is extraordinarily inert, with the result that, before he knows what is happening, he finds himself being dictated to by the small minority of men of ill-will. Or are even the dictators entirely men of ill-will? I know men who have met Mussolini and who say he is a good fellow, and I am sure that others have felt the same about Hitler. I have never myself found that a man's politics had much to do with his being or not being a good fellow. I have noticed at the same time that good fellows are curiously capable of doing things that make their fellow-good-fellows miserable.

From this I infer that, though we are mostly good fellows, we are mostly good fellows on a limited scale—that our good-fellowship is effective as a rule, only within a clearly drawn circle. Take, for example, a common Victorian type—the rich and ruthless employer. He was, I am convinced, as often as not a good fellow. He was, at his best, faithful in friendship, charitable to the poor, genial in company, a devoted husband and a tender parent. He was a good fellow, that is, within his own class and family circle. He was convinced, however, that iron economic laws existed that made it impossible to behave like a good fellow outside that circle—that, if he allowed his heart to get the better of his head and persuade him to consider the health, wealth and happiness of his workers—even of the children who sweated in his factories—his own family would be impoverished and probably ruined. His thoughts on the subject were muzzy, but it may be said that he looked on the workers as a race doomed by Nature—and even by God—to their condition and no more able to escape from their condition than the small birds that are the prey of hawks. To some of those who hold a different theory he seems a heartless monster. But he was not—at least, not always. He was, within his limits, a good fellow. I remember hearing one of the best fellows I ever knew protesting indignantly against a proposal for a minimum wage of a pound a week for corporation employees.

Epitaphs, whatever the cynics may say, do not lie. We are mostly good fellows—up to a point. I wish the psychologists would set up a committee to inquire into the question why, being such good fellows, we are not better fellows. What is it that at some point corrupts us? Why is it that, though we are happiest (and other people are happiest) while we are good fellows, we ever allow ourselves to be tempted to become bad fellows? Money is certainly one explanation. Love of money has always been able to invent theories and philosophies which justify the good fellow in becoming a bad fellow for purposes of business. For love of money men have not only starved their workers but betrayed their colleagues and their friends. This is—or was—known as the struggle for existence which inevitably results in the survival of the fittest.

It is not, however, I think, owing to the love of money on the part of the few that the good fellows have lost control in so many parts of Europe to-day. Politics, I imagine, is the chief corruptor of our time—theories of the State which, instead of regarding the good fellow as the ideal citizen, offer us as a conception of the ideal citizen an idolator on his knees offering his blood as a sacrifice to that cold monster. Let a man believe that politics is the most important thing in the world, and Heaven knows where he will end. I do not underestimate the importance of politics or of the State or patriotism. I am myself a Nationalist, and believe that Nationalism, as interpreted by good fellows, is a creed that enriches humanity. But I do not believe that any political creed or system is worth a button except in so far as it helps to make the world—or a country—fit for good fellows to live in.

It is said that if you allow the good fellows to rule, the result is usually chaos—that the good fellows are so good that, though in the majority, they have not the heart to suppress the minority of bad fellows. As a ruler of men, we are told, the good fellow is nearly always weak, and the best that we can hope for is a benevolent despot. I wonder whether this is true? If it is, it is surely time for the good fellows to get together, as they say, and discuss the methods of getting control of the world and of giving it the pleasures without the pains of law and order. The League of Nations was a beginning, but unfortunately from the first some of the members suspected each other of not being as good fellows as they pretended to be. The chief difficulty about all such conferences is that the bad fellow always suspects the good fellow and the good fellow is never half suspicious enough of

the bad fellow. Is the position hopeless? I do not know. But, if Lord Horder's estimate of us is true—that we are mostly good fellows—I think we ought at least to have a shot at running the affairs of this potentially delightful planet. Y. Y.

OYSTER CULTURE

AMONGST edible shellfish the oyster reigns beyond dispute supreme. No animal which lives in the sea is collected in such vast numbers or gives employment to so many people in so many diverse countries. Man, struggling towards civilisation, was nourished on oysters, as great mounds of shells in kitchen-middens of Neolithic man bear witness. Mythology has never enshrined the pioneer, pre-human possibly, who added the oyster to human diet, but we may echo the words of John Gay that:

> The man had sure a palate covered o'er
> With brass or steel, that on the rocky shore
> First broke the cozy oyster's pearly coat,
> And risked the living morsel down his throat.

What had been the barest of necessities to the savage was acclaimed amongst the rarest of delicacies by the gourmets of both classic and modern civilisations. No Roman banquet was complete without unlimited oysters, of which the bloated Vitellius is said to have consumed one thousand at a single meal. Demands such as these strained the productivity of what is naturally amongst the most fecund of animals. The solution was found by a Roman knight, Sergius Orata, who began the cultivation of oysters in the Lucrine Lake near Baiæ. Pliny has recorded that this pioneer of aquiculture reaped ample financial rewards for his ingenuity. Actually, as in so much else, Europe had been anticipated by China, where the cultivation of oysters on bamboos stuck in shallow water goes back to much more remote time.

But the oysters of Lucrinus took second place in the estimation of the Roman patrician after the invasion of Britain and the discovery of the "native" oyster at Richborough in Kent. This flat, rounded oyster was regarded as greatly superior in flavour to the deeper, more irregularly shaped oyster of the Mediterranean and abundantly worth the trouble and expense of importing into Italy. To this day, despite the great number of species and varieties of oysters since discovered in all parts of the world, the native remains pre-eminent.

With the decline of Rome the cultivation of oysters, although apparently never discontinued in the environs of Naples, ceased to be an important commercial undertaking. With the rebirth of European civilisation new oyster beds were discovered and exploited along the coasts of Europe as far north as Scandinavia. The American colonists found teeming beds of oysters from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Louisiana.

Not until the middle of the nineteenth century, when great industrial populations became massed in large towns and rapid communication became possible, did the demand for oysters again outrun the supply. The problem first became acute in France, where natural beds which had formerly produced hundreds of millions of oysters annually shrank in yield to under one-tenth of that figure. A new Sergius Orata then arose in the person of a certain Professor Coste of the Collège de France. A visit to Lake Fusaro, where the Roman methods of culture still survived, convinced him of the possibility of extending these, on a much larger scale, to the coasts of France.

Coste was fortunate in obtaining the personal support of Napoleon III, who enabled him to carry out large-scale experiments first on the coast of Brittany and later in the shallow, land-locked Bay of Arcachon south of Bordeaux. Coste perceived the two-fold nature of the problem. First there was the need for providing suitable settling surface for the immense numbers of freely swimming "larval" oysters, which are discharged by the parent and the vast majority of which inevitably die under natural conditions, and second, the provision of beds on which these newly-settled or "spat" oysters could be reared with ample food and adequate protection from their many enemies.

Coste had his successes and his failures—his scientific imagination was not supported by any powers of practical invention—but gradually there grew up out of his endeavours the great modern oyster industry of France. To-day hundreds of millions of oysters are produced annually at Arcachon alone, where the broad, tidal expanse of the Bay forms a vast oyster farm, the greatest scene of aquiculture in the world.

Oyster culture, its methods adapted to different species and widely varying conditions, has spread to both shores of America and to Australia, while in the Far East exact knowledge has extended the scope of an age-old but empirical culture. Only we in this country have lagged behind. There are a variety of reasons for this. Our innate conservatism, the difficulties of culture when the oysters are never uncovered by the tide, but perhaps most of all owing to the unassailable reputation of the "native," which is, in legal definition, an oyster "spatted and reared in the rivers and creeks between the South Foreland and Orford Ness."

There was a time when natives abounded and could be sold at eightpence a bushel, a time when Sam Weller could comment, passing through Whitechapel, on the remarkable connection between poverty and oysters. But of late years stocks have fallen so low that eightpence or more has been asked and readily obtained for a single native. And many of these, though reared and fattened between the South Foreland and Orford Ness, were spatted on French or Dutch beds and later "relaid" on the classic beds of the native. Extensive importation, and relaying, of the inferior Portuguese and American oysters has supplied the demand for cheaper oysters.

In the years immediately succeeding the war a mysterious malady spread through the stock of native oysters and those of the same species in France and Holland. Numbers sank perilously near the figure below which an animal population has difficulty in maintaining itself. The stock has not materially increased in the years which have since elapsed. The first ray of hope to those who desire the preservation of so famous an animal and the continuance of an industry which dates from the days of the Roman Empire, or those whose love for the native is not backed by a long purse, comes from a recent scientific publication of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

For some years past the scientific staff of the Ministry has been experimenting on the breeding of oysters in concrete tanks. Those used for this purpose were erected for the purification of mussels collected in the estuary of the Conway River in North Wales but which are not needed for that purpose during the summer. The problem seems simple. Place a supply of breeding oysters in the tanks and collect, on some suitable collector, the spat which settles at the end of the brief swimming phase in the oyster's otherwise quiescent existence. But difficulties proved manifold. On several occasions a good fall of spat was obtained; but in later years, with conditions apparently identical, there was no spat.

Finally the problem has come down to one of nutrition, how to provide the necessarily intense culture of microscopic plants of a type which can in the first place enter the minute mouth of the larval oysters and in the second be digested by them. Only after such food has been provided can a good spat-fall be obtained. Recent experiments have revealed both the ideal organisms to cultivate and the best method of enriching the tanks to permit of their rapid multiplication. After the spat has settled the problem changes somewhat. The oyster is now rather more catholic in its tastes, its powers both of feeding and digestion develop, but care has still to be exercised in the provision of food organisms.

If the promise of these experiments is fulfilled it may soon be possible to rear relatively enormous stocks of spat oysters which, suitably protected, can be laid on the natural beds. We may look forward, with growing confidence, to the day when breeding tanks will be erected adjacent to the oyster

fisheries and when the beds will annually be replenished by a stock of spat unaffected, as hitherto, by the vagaries of weather, enemies and the many other variables in the natural habitat.

C. M. Y.

UNFOUNDED RUMOURS

There have been rumours recently that some action by the Assembly of the League of Nations is contemplated with a view to "regularising" the position of Italy in Abyssinia . . . we may be confident that our Government will not be guilty of such a betrayal of international law and justice.—Letter from Dr. Gilbert Murray and Lord Cecil. *Times*. Aug. 24th.

We will banish groundless rumours from men's hearing,
Which refutations only seem to spread,
We will resurrect the faith, fast disappearing,
That Britain always means what she has said,
We will steadily and mightily revive
The great Hoare pledge of 1935.
We will not yield to bluster or defiance,
Or give Imperial Fascist claims support,
To purchase by perfidious compliance
Mediterranean peace, however short.

Above intrigues and sophistries Genevan,
The bargaining, the bleating and the blah,
When all the birds come home to roost at even
And hoot the knell of Abyssinia,
Unshaken on our unilateral course
We will condemn the fruits of lawless force.
Recovering her voice among the nations,
Great Britain, trumpet-tongued, will leave no doubt
That all these tales are baseless fabrications. . . .

It's curious how such rumours get about. SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

LABOUR AND THE LEFT BOOK CLUB

SIR,—Perhaps you will allow me to make some comments on Dr. Dalton's letter in your last issue.

1. The offer we made to Dr. Dalton was made to him because, as Chairman of the National Executive of the Labour Party, he seemed the natural person to approach. It was his suggestion, not Mr. Gollancz's and mine, that he should discuss it with selected colleagues on the National Executive, rather than with the Executive as a whole. Naturally, we felt that this was a matter for him, and not for us, to decide.

2. I should like to make it clear that our offer was to publish two special double numbers of *Left News*, each composed of 60,000 words and, Club news apart, solely devoted to articles on the Labour Party programme, to be written by people whose names Dr. Dalton himself approved.

3. At our first meeting Dr. Dalton raised no difficulty about the factor of time; indeed, without committing himself, he appeared to approve our proposals. It was only at the second meeting that he laid down conditions and stressed the time-difficulty.

4. Of these, Mr. Gollancz and I at once accepted the idea of regular monthly articles intended to bring the "official" or "majority" point of view (as Dr. Dalton likes) before our readers. We rejected the idea of additional members of the Selection Committee of the Club, because it was plain from the whole character of the discussion on this proposal that Dr. Dalton had in view the giving to the Club a kind of semi-official character. We felt that we could not possibly agree to this because we conceived it to be fundamental not only to preserve *now* the Club's independence, but to develop it even more vigorously.

5. I do not think Dr. Dalton can really wish to convey to your readers the inference that we made him our offer because it would be a "good investment" from our point of view. When we made it, we had not even thought of its result on our members. As a keen supporter of the Labour Party, I had thought it urgent to do all I could to make its membership campaign a success; and I found Mr. Gollancz as eager as I was. The main impact of my article in *Left News* has been to produce a great mass of letters from our members insisting that if the Club becomes an expression of the "official" movement, it will become a dead thing in which they will lose interest.

6. I am, of course, not concerned with Dr. Dalton's comment upon your review of Mr. Attlee's book. I may be permitted, however, to point out that my own review of it in *Left News* drew emphatic attention to its interest and importance, and, while criticising what I take to be its erroneous account of Marxism, urged upon our members and the nearly 700 discussion circles into which they are grouped, the importance of profound attention to its argument.

7. I cannot, of course, go into the question of Labour Party policy here. But there are one or two points it is necessary to make. As the Executive has ruled out of order the 43 resolutions dealing with Unity at the Bournemouth Conference, I do not find it easy to agree that we shall arrive there at "a sincere agreement regarding aim and method." That kind of agreement arises out of full and friendly discussion and not from its suppression. And while, of course, I agree with Dr. Dalton on the importance of a Labour victory at the next election, I cannot think that the outlook of the Executive, even with full attention to the interesting points made by Mr. Crossman and Mr. Reynolds, is enough. Right action comes from right theory. The theory which lies behind the outlook of the National Executive does not seem to us capable of securing the mental climate in which victory is won. But, as Dr. Dalton says, perhaps, after Bournemouth, we shall all be able to make a new start. I agree with him that it is needed.

Manor Cottage, Little Bradfield, Braintree, Essex. HAROLD J. LASKI

SIR,—In spite of the repeated assurances of Messrs. Gollancz, Strachey and Laski that the Left Book Club supports no specific policy, and however much truth there is in Mr. Gollancz's statement that the apparent predominance in the Club's publications of the Communist viewpoint is due solely to the greater vigour of its exponents, it becomes increasingly clear that in fact the Left Book Club exists for the propagation of "Marxist" (Communist Party) doctrines.

One may perhaps ignore the fact that the publication as a monthly choice of Mr. Attlee's book was balanced by a special editorial in the *Left News* of the same month, in which Professor Laski attacked the Labour Party leaders—possibly this was mere coincidence. But the instructions distributed to the Club's group conveners for the conduct of discussions on the book are a very different matter.

In the first place, these instructions pick out and distort several of Mr. Attlee's remarks, so that they shall appear to coincide with "Marxist" interpretations. One example: Mr. Attlee points out, as one of the advantages of the British Labour Party over many Continental Socialist Parties, that by reason of its peculiar historical development it is not tied down to any cut-and-dried theoretical system. This the instructions interpret thus: "Major Attlee stresses that this casual development has resulted in an unusual lack of theoretical basis to the Labour Party."

Secondly, these instructions contain numerous extracts from Mr. Attlee's book, with which the discussion leader is told to contrast the appropriate "Marxist" view, and is offered various references from "Marxist" and Communist works. Now, to such a method of discussion in itself there can be no objection, but when one compares similar syllabuses issued in reference to books such as *Soviet Democracy* by Communist Pat Sloan, or *The Post-War History of the British Working Class* by Communist Alan Hutt, the significance is clear. For these instructions contain no criticism of any kind, merely suggestions that this or that statement or passage by Mr. Sloan or Mr. Hutt should be carefully considered, deeply impressed, etc.

Of course, there is no earthly reason why the Left Book Club should not put the weight of its influence behind Communist propaganda, if it wishes. What is objectionable is that it pretends it does not do so, and does all the time. Mr. Gollancz emphasises repeatedly that not *all* the Club's publications are communistic or even pro-United Front. True; but no doubt Mr. Gollancz is well aware that it is possible to make far more effective propaganda for Communist theories by including an occasional piece of devil's advocacy, and thereby appearing to give everyone an equal platform, than by plugging one unvarying theme, whereby the Club might lay itself open to the charge of bias. It is also worthy of note that most of the reviews in the *Left News* are not

reviews at all; they are unqualified eulogies. I can at the moment recall only three books that have been criticised at all adversely—Mr. Spender's *Forward from Liberalism*, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, and Mr. Attlee's book, all books that hardly fit in with the Communist "line."

It is usual when one criticises the Communists and their allies to declare that one "knows they are sincere." Evidently the organisers of the Left Book Club are so sincere, according to their lights, that they have no time for ordinary honesty in their dealings with those who hold different views. Consequently the Labour Party are probably well-advised to be wary of those gentlemen—*et dona ferentes*.

FRANK I. FREEDMAN

11 Auriol Road,
W. Kensington, W.14.

SIR,—Although some of the members of the Left Book Club may indeed be sheep (as they were all dubbed by a correspondent in the earlier controversy on the subject in your columns), it is difficult to believe that the value to the Labour Party of a free platform in two issues of the *Left News* would be entirely counterbalanced by "the one-sided propaganda of the *Left News* as hitherto conducted." And did not Mr. Gollancz offer space in future issues for an article to be written by a supporter of "the present leadership of the Labour Party"? The Labour Party Executive are convinced that their arguments are sound. Why are they afraid (as, from their refusal of the Club's offer, they appear to be) that they cannot express them cogently enough to convince L.B.C. members?

Dr. Dalton fears that his followers (sheep perhaps?) would join the L.B.C. in large numbers on the strength of the two Labour Party issues of the *Left News* and would then be weaned from him by Mr. Strachey's arguments and criticism. Surely this would be off-set by the possibility of the official arguments converting existing Left Book Club members to the official Labour Party?

And does not Dr. Dalton overlook the fact that the L.B.C., as well as being a political force, is also, and fundamentally a commercial undertaking dependent for its success on providing what its customers want? If the Labour Party had done as much as the Communist Party to enrol from its own ranks members for the Left Book Club, or if Dr. Dalton had accepted the Club's offer of a free opportunity of converting its members to his point of view, would not the resultant change in the political balance of the L.B.C. membership have produced either a change in the balance of the choices or a spectacular drop in the Club's membership?

In addition, Dr. Dalton's request that a supporter of "the present leadership of the Labour Party" should be added to the selection committee would carry more weight if backed by a large number of the Club's members.

JOHN G. PATTISSON

St. Columba Hotel, Isle of Iona, Argyll.

CLASS AND NATIONAL WAR

SIR,—I am astonished that the author of such an intelligent and objective book as *The Road to Wigan Pier* should trot out that hoary chestnut of socialist propaganda that: "War against a foreign country only happens when the moneyed classes think they are going to profit from it."

Does Mr. Orwell really suppose that it was the German capitalists, with their immensely valuable international connections in London, New York, on the Rand, etc., who thought they were going to profit from the last war; or that the wealthy Italians (if there are any left!) welcomed the prospect of paying for Mussolini's expensive adventure in Abyssinia; or that the Japanese merchants are enjoying the spectacle of the destruction of their businesses in Shanghai which the policy of the Japanese militarists has brought about.

The capitalist may, in Mr. Orwell's judgment, be a scoundrel, but he is not always, and necessarily, a fool.

I do not deny that during the last war I disliked that smug section of our own population to whom the war brought unusual and undeserved opportunities for gain or self-importance a great deal more than my official enemy the Turk, nor that in my subsequent experience as a political candidate I came across numerous instances (more frequent, I might say, among workmen in sheltered industries than among capitalists) of people to whom the war was literally "the time of their lives." But to say that any of these would support a foreign war because they hoped to profit from it is a silly libel both on their intelligence and their humanity.

On the other hand, I entirely agree with Mr. Orwell's distinction between foreign and civil war. A pacifist, as I see it, is a man who will fight for what he really believes to be worth fighting for, but not for what he is merely told to believe. And though Mr. Orwell's beliefs and mine may be different, I think this definition entitles me to pass his "test"!

Lythe Hill Farmhouse, RUSSELL SIDEBOTTOM
Haslemere.

HORTICULTURAL WAGES

SIR,—It will be very satisfactory to many horticultural workers to know (as Mr. Pointing shows) that the National Union for Agricultural Workers is acting vigorously on their behalf. But not only are the glass-house workers "sweated" and worked under bad conditions, since wages and hours and conditions in many of the tree, plant and shrub nurseries are very bad indeed. Conditions in Berks and East Anglia particularly need investigation.

Your readers will be amazed to read that "the employers' organisation has refused to meet the men's union"—in 1937! If this is really the last word of the Horticultural Trades Association or the Lea Valley Growers' Association or both, surely the recalcitrant attitude of such employers should be raised in Parliament? What are the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Agriculture for if they cannot assist the two sides to get together in such circumstances as can be shown to exist?

Mr. Pointing confirms what I stated. There are "cases in which lads and women have been paid at less than the minimum." In other words, the law is being broken. May one inquire what the Ministry of Agriculture's inspectors are doing?

In further confirmation, a friend sends me a cutting from the private trade-paper of the employers, *The Nurseryman and Seedsman*, dated May last. The editor states:

> While the majority of Nurserymen make no attempt to evade the Minimum Wages . . . many reputable firms do so in the case of apprentices.
>
> We all of us know of many instances where this law is being honoured in the breach rather than the observance. . . .
>
> In 999 cases out of a thousand, horticultural workers are unaware that they have any rights.

Candid, is it not? Clearly the nursery employers are (according to their own paper) breaking the law! It is an amazing state of affairs to say the least. What is the Ministry doing, or going to do, about it? I am told that there is a Horticultural Division at the Ministry, but that such vulgar topics as the worker and his wages do not engage its august attention, which is concentrated on the employer and his demands. It is time that these illegalities of under-payment and non-overtime payment were noticed by Mr. W. R. Morrison as Minister or as "one of His Majesty's Counsel learned in the law."

C. LAWRENCE

London.

THE STALLS OF LIFE

SIR,—Though Mr. Justice's letter may appear to have strayed from "This England," his points are sound.

It is indeed important that the posts he mentions should be held by gentlemen—that is, by men accustomed to a high standard of living as of right and therefore free to develop self-confidence, a cultured and balanced outlook, initiative within loyalty to a code and a community (however narrow) and easy assurance in command. And the public schools (or the homes from which their pupils come) do indeed produce such gentlemen.

The boy from the State-aided schools has in general a tradition of inferiority, from which he can only rise by strong personal ambition in a dog-fight for scholarships, for jobs, for influence. Even then the tradition is apt to make him a bad mixer, a biased judge of men, a touchy or harsh administrator. The brilliant men are imperfectly assimilated by the public school class; the less brilliant, as managers, do its dirtier work.

How can the State-aided school remove this tradition and breed "gentlemen?" In the words of a friend, now a Governor of the orphan school at which he was educated, "The man who spends £200 a year on his son's education expects not only that the boy shall be brought up to assume his own superiority, but that all other boys shall be brought up to acknowledge it." The urge of most Governors and many Headmasters is towards a debasing sense of gratitude and an unhealthy craving for "success."

In any case the lack of culture at home and the pressure of examinations in school combine with understaffing to make training in public spirit and social ease almost impossible. To suggest remedies for this and for the Matriculation fetish, which is a part of it, would take me beyond the limits of a letter.

Eighteen years ago it was my business to find jobs for secondary school boys. Realising the facts I have stated, I became a schoolmaster. And my public school education has enabled me to obtain posts only where the authorities expect to find me reactionary! In consideration of their views I must sign myself

TRAITOR

THE ANATOMY OF SPIRIT

SIR,—I suppose I should take it as a compliment that Mr. Robert Waller, in a full column impugning my book, *The Anatomy of Spirit*, neglects to deal with any of my main points and gives a very distorted version of the one portion of my argument he does summarise. The success or failure of my book must be measured, not in terms of the few initial generalisations that Mr. Waller quotes—generalisations so broad as to be indeed almost meaningless in isolation—but by the degree to which it fills them out with the complexity of reality.

A Marxist book such as this of mine does not seek to propound any final solutions; it seeks to clear the ground, to expose the structural bases which the process of idealist abstraction (analysed at length in my book—its main theme, but not considered by Mr. Waller) have obscured. Obviously a Communist society will still have problems of relationship. But *our* problem is to go ahead with the realisation of human unity in the terms in which the issues present themselves to us.

The problem of the "despair of despised love," like any other problem, is not one of an abstract entity. In class-society it is very much involved with the discordant social tensions amid which it breeds, as my book strives to show. Yet these basic social tensions Mr. Waller dismisses as "artificial." If he had read as far as p. 93 in my book, he would have found that I made the only point it is possible to make from our position about love-relations in a Communist world-society. A large part of my book is taken up by attempting to show how the sexual discord, individual refraction of the discords in the travailing human whole, provides the imagery of pang and reconciliation and the personal basis from which abstraction proceeds. But perhaps all this complicated argument of mine is what Mr. Waller, as the representative of "every man with a mind at all," includes under his classification of "what not."

JACK LINDSAY

TYNDALE

SIR,—May one of your subscribers who is a Christadelphian express his amazement at the remarks of Mr. A. L. Rowse in his review of Mr. J. F. Mozley's book on William Tyndale?

Mr. Rowse asks whether it was such a good thing that the Bible should be "translated and circulated in the vernacular without authority," and by way of answer points to what he describes as "the rubbish untaught people"—and he expressly names Christadelphians first among these—"develop for themselves," and so says, "One sees how right the Catholic Church was and how necessary is the principle of authority in dealing with human fools."

I suppose that the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has an open mind about the Bible and what it teaches, and its readers little time for us "untaught fools" who believe in its message, but as stalwarts of liberty you ought to know that the story of the English Bible is bound up with the well-being of the common people. The efforts of Caedmon, the Venerable Bede, and Alfred the Great made the Bible in the vernacular a foundation factor in moulding the character of the British race; and Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale—yes, and Sir Thomas More—were inspired to give people the Scriptures in their own tongue not merely out of piety or even out of revolt, but to provide the only authority to counteract a system which had become more political than Christian and which historians agree was formal, intolerant, corrupt and alien.

As for us fools, the untaught Christadelphians, we are grateful to inherit in this country the liberty (from either tyranny, authority or tradition) to see in the pages of the English Bible a wonderful standard of justice, the principle of the equal right of all to the bounty of creation, and a code of life wherein righteousness would bring peace; we see in it, too, a hatred of oppression and of all the evils due to man's greedy misrule of man. Moreover, we have the clear promise of the return to this earth of Jesus Christ to establish a new World Order, comparable to His own unique character, under which even disease and death will be abolished. Who has any real hope that Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, a well-intentioned but perplexed National Government, or the most united front of Socialists, can give humanity what it needs? And if the Kingdom of God is sneered at as foolishness by the wise men of to-day, it was so in Athens of old.

EDGAR TAYLOR

42 Wharncliffe Gardens, S.E.25.

P.S.—Were we not given in your own columns the information that the German Protestant Church was the only force that had withstood Hitler with any effect?

SIR,—I venture to offer some remarks upon Mr. Rowse's review of Mr. Mozley's life of Tyndale printed in your issue of August 21st. I take it that Mr. Rowse will allow that spiritual forces can move men to action. I take it, also, that he, as an "authority on the Tudor period," has studied such forces and has acquainted himself with Tyndale's theology. He will have discovered that Tyndale well knew the difficulty of attacking "the old tradition" and the dangers of private judgment. But, like Jeremiah and Paul, he was constrained to preach the Gospel. He was not setting up private judgment pure and simple against the authority of the Church. He offered a rival authority, the Bible. We may grant that the circulation of a vernacular version stimulates the exercise of private judgment. Tyndale counted the cost and thought it worth paying. So does Protestantism to-day. Tyndale urged readers of the Bible to take difficulties to learned men; he begged them not to quarrel over ambiguities or points which might be considered "indifferent"; and more than once he provided a key to Scripture, namely, a brief exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith. He was sure that the fundamental truths were plain to every unbiased reader. The "promises of God" could be read by all—in an English text. And the reading of these promises, he knew, creates faith, and faith love, and love works. We may understand More's difficulties; but dangers have sometimes to be faced. Some of us have felt the creative power of the Word of God in a way which it would be spiritual treachery to call private judgment. Perhaps it is not possible, without such experience, to begin to understand "these piddling Reformers." Really on all this Mr. Rowse should read William Tyndale.

S. L. GREENSLADE

St. John's College, Oxford.

PRICE OF FUR

SIR,—I make so bold, and courage I am sure is needed, to make a few observations on the welfare of animals prompted by Mr. Grant Watson's article, "The Price of Fur."

There is one fact that is persistently ignored by those who write about animals. It is a fact that animals are less sensitive to pain and discomfort than we are. This is evident not only by their reactions, or lack of reactions, to stimuli that are painful to us, but it can be demonstrated that they have far fewer nerve endings on the surface of the body than we have. If a pin is stuck into a dog the odds are that he will not know it. Any Vet. who uses the hypodermic syringe will say that in 49 cases out of 50 there is not the slightest reaction to the prick of the needle. I myself have seen a horse, whose hoof had been crushed by a steam roller, standing on the protruding bone eating from his nosebag while he waited for the Vet. to arrive.

Now I have no experience of Silver Foxes, and it is quite obvious that the method of slaughter is stupidly cruel. I cannot help feeling, however, that Mr. Grant Watson's suggestion that they are housed under cruel conditions is based on the fact that he would find the conditions cruel for himself. That these conditions, as he describes them, cause pain or discomfort to the foxes seems to me to be very doubtful.

A great deal of work has recently been done on the behaviour of animals and it has been fairly conclusively shown that, with the exception of the higher apes, reasoning power is completely absent. The wild animal's whole life is governed by specific reactions to the various stimuli that it receives. It seems very hard to believe that a silver fox, born and bred in captivity, can hanker for the wide open spaces. My own bitch, who has always enjoyed complete freedom, is, of course, shut up when she comes in season. At first I used to confine her in her kennel at home,

but I found that she was continually whining and fretting when she saw and heard her friends around her. I now send her to the Vet., where she spends three weeks in complete solitude and, as far as her reactions show, in complete content.

And surely Mr. Grant Watson has over-estimated the effect of cold on the foxes. If they can react by growing a thick coat it seems unlikely that they suffer any cruelty. I suspect that a well-fed silver fox can stand the most extreme temperature without discomfort, and, from his description of the farm, it appears that their bodily wants are immediately satisfied.

To reply to Mr. Grant Watson's last suggestion, that a year or two of freedom, with death in a gin at the end, is preferable to captivity, I would ask him to consider which is better off, a well-housed budgerigar or a wild chaffinch in a snowbound winter?

Broadwater House, C. K. BROWN
Burwood Park, Walton-on-Thames.

THE MAIMED MIND

SIR,—I read Mr. Richards' letter on the Basque children with much satisfaction, but thought he might have commented still more strongly on the *Sunday Dispatch's* hysterical account of their behaviour on hearing of the fall of Bilbao. I have been waiting for someone to hail that outburst of grief and indignation—that impulse to rush to avenge their city and people or share the same fate—with wholehearted admiration, not to excuse it.

Surely it is incapacity for any intense feeling that stamps many people with what Fuller calls "a maimed mind." And it is the dictators' most solid achievement that they have calloused us into accepting with the toast and bacon news of the mass torture of prisoners, and men, women and children blown to pieces by sprayed steel. REDCLIFFE MCKIE

8 First Avenue, Hove, Sussex.

INDIAN CENSORSHIP

SIR,—It might not be generally known in this country that, despite the fact Congress has assumed office in a number of Provinces, the Viceroy still has absolute authority to ban books published and circulated in England from India.

Some weeks ago the Customs officials prohibited the entry of Mr. Reg Reynold's *The White Sahibs in India* and Mr. C. L. R. James's *World Revolution*.

Now my latest book, *Africa and World Peace*, has been proscribed. The Bombay authorities have confiscated a number of copies from Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala, Sons & Co., the well-known firm of Indian booksellers.

It seems to me that as long as such a system of censorship exists all talk about democracy in India, the Constitution notwithstanding, is a mockery.

What are British Socialists, Democrats and anti-Imperialists going to do about it? GEORGE PODMORE

The International African Service Bureau,
94 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE

SIR,—Your correspondent "D. I." does not seem to have read my article very carefully. He speaks of many "like myself who resent being classed with snobs because when we are ill we go confidently to our G.P.s."

So far from attributing snobbishness to people who go confidently to their G.P.s, my reference was to the individual who "being at heart a snob, takes it for granted that any doctor with a brass plate on one of the expensive doors of Harley Street must be in all ways superior to the practitioners in the suburb or provincial town. By this sort of person, the general practitioner is regarded as a mere emergency makeshift."

With many of Dr. Cronin's criticisms, and with nearly all his suggestions for a better organisation of our medical services, I am in entire agreement. Unfortunately, his method of presenting his case has led a large number of sentimental readers to form an altogether distorted picture of the realities.

Censorious "exposures" of the sins of others, whether the others are doctors or statesmen, Communists or Capitalists, are always sure of a welcome in the breasts of the self-righteous and the morally complacent. Indignation is commonly a manifestation of a guilty conscience to which its owner resolutely turns a blind eye. HARRY ROBERTS

Miscellany

MISSALED ANGELS

"PERPETUALLY"—the word occurs, recurs—
Angels, towards the day-spring of their youth
Perpetually moving, stationary! Stirs
No wing of feather, windless as corn where Ruth
Stands in imagined verse or, to the still shout
Of star-mouthed myriads the Damozel leans out.

Moving perpetually, with faces bright
Massed Swedenborgian angels, missal-bound,
Orbed like small suns of self-creating light
Converging from dark corners of God's mind
Look towards that day-spring, the sweet smile of youth
As Keats through history's eyes looked back on Ruth.

Perpetually moving, farther, farther removes
That cynosure-circle until imagined, made
Over and over, it, many-haloed, proves
The invisible Fountain in faces that do not fade
Missaled forever, not far, not far, but near—
The day-spring of their youth 'tis here, 'tis here!

W. J. TURNER

YOU MAKE YOUR OWN LIFE

UPSTAIRS from the street a sign in electric light said "Gent's Saloon." I went up. There was a small, hot, back room full of sunlight, with hair clippings on the floor, towels hanging from a peg and newspapers on the chairs. "Take a seat. Just finishing," said the barber. It was a lie. He wasn't anywhere near finishing. He had in fact just begun a shave. The customer was having everything.

In a dead place like this town you always had to wait. I was waiting for a train, now I had to wait for a haircut. It was a small town in a valley with one long street, and a slow mud-coloured river moving between willows and the backs of houses.

I picked up a newspaper. A man had murdered an old woman, a clergyman's sister was caught stealing gloves in a shop, a man who had identified the body of his wife at an inquest on a drowning fatality met her three days later on Folkestone pier. Four thousand Japanese had been killed in an earthquake, an Indian had walked barefoot on a bed of fire. Ten miles from this town the skeletons of men killed in a battle eight centuries ago had been dug up on the Downs. That was nearer. Still, I put the paper down. I looked at the two men in the room.

The shave had finished now, the barber was cutting the man's hair. It was glossy black hair and small curls of it fell on the floor. I could see the man in the mirror. He was in his thirties. He had a swarthy skin and brilliant long black eyes. The lashes were long, too, and the lids when he blinked were pale. There was just that suggestion of weakness. Now he was shaved there was a sallow glister to his skin like a Hindu's, and as the barber clipped away and grunted his breaths, the dark man sat engrossed in his reflection, half-smiling at himself and very deeply pleased.

The barber was careful and responsible in his movements but nonchalant and detached. He was in his thirties, too, a young man with fair, receding hair, brushed back from his forehead. He did not speak to his customer. His customer did not speak to him. He went on from one job to the next silently. Now he was rattling his brush in the jar, wiping the razor, pushing the chair forward to the basin. Now he gently pushed the man's head down, now he ran the taps and was soaping the head and rubbing it. A peculiar look of amused affection was on his face as he looked down at the soaped head.

"How long are you going to be?" I said. "I've got a train."

He looked at the clock. He knew the trains.

"Couple of minutes," he said.

He wheeled a machine on a tripod to the back of the man. A curved black thing like a helmet enclosed the head. The machine was plugged to the wall. There were phials with coloured liquids in them, and soon steam was rushing out under the helmet. It looked like a machine you see in a Fun Fair. I don't know what happened to the man or what the barber did. Shave, hot towel, haircut, shampoo, this machine and then yellow liquid like treacle out of a bottle—that customer had everything.

I wondered how much he would have to pay.

Then the job was over. The dark man got up. The clippers had been over the back of his neck and he looked like a guardsman. He was dressed in a square-shouldered grey suit, very dandyish for this town, and he had a silk handkerchief sticking out of his breast pocket. He wore a violet and silver tie. He patted it as the barber brushed his coat. He was delighted with himself.

"So long, Fred," he smiled faintly. The look of dandified derision was unmistakable.

"Cheero, Albert," said the upright barber, and his lips closed to a small, hardly perceptible smile too. Thoughtfully, ironically, the barber watched his handiwork go. The man hadn't paid.

I sat in the chair. It was warm, too warm, where the man had sat. The barber put the sheet round me. The barber was smiling to himself like a man remembering a tune. He was not thinking about me.

The barber said that the machine made steam open the pores. He glanced at the door where the man had gone. "Some people want everything," he said, "some want nothing." You had to have a machine like that.

He tucked in the cotton wool. He got out the comb and scissors. His fingers gently depressed my head. I could see him in the mirror bending to the back of my head. He was clipping away. He was a dull young man with pale blue eyes and a look of ironical stubbornness in him. The small dry smile was still like claw-marks at the corners of his lips.

"Three bob a time," he said. He spoke into the back of my neck, and nodded to the door. "*He* has it every week."

He clipped away.

"His hair's coming out. That's why he has it. Going bald. You can't stop that. You can delay it but you can't stop it. Can't always be young. He thinks you can." He smiled drily but with affection.

"But he wasn't so old."

The barber stood up. The faint smile became sardonic.

"That man!" he said. He mused to himself with growing satisfaction. He worked away in long silence as if to savour every possible flavour of my remark. The result of this meditation was to make him change his scissors for a finer pair.

"He ought to be dead," he said.

"T.B." he said, with quiet scorn.

He looked at me in the mirror.

"It's wonderful," he said, as if to say it was nothing of the sort.

"It's wonderful what the doctors can do," I said.

"I don't mean doctors," he said. "Consumptives! Tuh! They're wonderful." As much as to say a sick man can get away with anything—but you try if you're healthy and see what happens!

He went on cutting. There was a glint in his pale blue eyes. He snipped away amusedly as if he were attending to every individual hair at the back of my head.

"You see his throat?" he said suddenly.

"What about his throat?" I asked.

"Didn't you notice anything? Didn't you see a mark a bit at the side?" He stood up and looked at me in the mirror.

"No," I said.

He bent down to the back of my neck again. "He cut his throat once," he said quietly. "Not satisfied with T.B.," he said with a grin. It was a small, firm, friendly grin. So long, Fred. Cheero, Albert. "Had to commit suicide."

"Wanted everything," I said.

"That's it," he said.

"A girl," the barber said. "He fell in love with a girl."

He clipped away.

"That's an item," said the barber absently.

He fell in love with a local girl who took pity on him when he was in bed, ill. Nursed him. Usual story. Took pity on him but wasn't interested in him in that way.

"A very attractive girl," said the barber.

"And he got it badly?"

"They get it badly, consumptives."

"Matter of fact," said the barber, stepping over for the clippers and shooting a hard sideways stare at me. "It was my wife."

"Before she was my wife," he said. There was a touch of quiet, amused resolution in him.

He'd known that chap since he was a kid. Went to school with him. Used to be his best friend. Still was. Always a lad. Regular nut. Had a milk business, was his own guv'nor till he got ill. Doing well.

"He knew I was courting her," he smiled. "That didn't stop him."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"I lay low," he said.

She had a job in the shop opposite. If you passed that shop you couldn't help noticing her in the cash desk near the door. "It's not for me to say—but she was the prettiest girl in this town," he said. "Still is," he mused.

"You've seen the river? You came over it by the station," he said. "Well he used to take her on the river when I was busy. I didn't mind. I knew my mind. She knew hers. I knew it was all right," he said.

"I knew him," he grinned. "But I knew her. 'Let him take you on the river,' I said."

I saw the barber's forehead and his dull blue eyes looking up for a moment over my head in the mirror.

"Damp river," he said reflectively. "Damp mists, I mean, on the river. Very flat, low-lying, unhealthy," he said. "That's where he made his mistake. It started with him taking her on the river."

"Double pneumonia once," he said. "Sixty cigarettes a day, burning the candle at both ends."

He grunted.

"He couldn't get away with it," he said.

When he got ill, the girl used to go and look after him. She used to go and read to him in the afternoons. "I used to turn up in the evenings, too, when we'd closed."

The barber came round to the front and took the brushes lazily. He glanced sardonically at the door as if expecting to see the man standing there. That cocksure irony in the barber seemed to warm up.

"Know what he used to say to her?" he said sharply, and smiled when I was startled. "'Here, Jenny,' he used to say, 'Tell Fred to go home and you pop into bed with me. I'm lonely.'" The young barber gave a short laugh.

"In front of me," he said.

"What did you say?"

"I told him to keep quiet or there'd be a funeral. Consumptives want it, they want it worse than others, but it kills them," he said.

"I thought you meant *you'd* kill him," I said.

"Kill him?" he said. "Me kill him?" He smiled scornfully at me: I was an outsider in this. "He tried to kill *me*," he said.

He looked back on that episode almost with artistic affection.

"Yeah," he said, wiping his hands on a towel. "Tried to poison me. Whisky. It didn't work. Back O.K.?" he said, holding up a mirror. "I don't drink."

"I went to his room," he said. "I was his best friend.

He was lying on the bed. Thin! All bones and blue veins and red patches, as if he'd been scalded, and eyes as bright as that bottle of bath salts. Not like he is now. There was a bottle of whisky and a glass by the side of the bed. He wanted me to have a drop. He knew I didn't drink."

"'I don't want one,' I said. 'Yes, you do,' he said. 'You know I never touch it,' I said. 'Well, touch it now,' he said. 'I tell you what,' he said. 'You're afraid.' 'Afraid of what?' I said. 'Afraid of catching what I've got. Touch your lips to it if you're not afraid. Just have a sip to show.'"

"I told him not to be a fool. I took the bottle from him. He had no right to have whisky in his state. He was wild when I took it. 'It'll do some people a bit of good,' I said, 'but it's poison to you.'"

"'It *is* poison,' he said."

"I took the bottle away. I gave it to a chap in the town. It nearly finished him. We found out it *was* poison. He'd put something in it."

I said I'd have a singe. The barber lit the taper. I felt the flame warm against my head. "Seals up the ends," the barber said. He lifted up the hair with the comb and ran the flame along.

"See the idea?" he said.

"What did you do?"

"Nothing," he said. "Just married my girl that week," the barber said. "When she told him we were going to get married he said, 'I'll give you something Fred won't give you.' We wondered what it would be. 'Something big,' he said. 'Best man's present,' he said. He winked at her. 'All I've got. I'm the best man.' That night he cut his throat." The barber made a grimace in the mirror, passed the scissors over his throat and gave a grin.

"Then he opened the window and called out to a kid in the street to fetch *her*. The kid came to me instead."

The barber smiled tolerantly. "Funny present," he said. He combed, he patted, he brushed. He pulled the wool out of the back of my neck. He went round it with the soft brush. Coming round to the front he adroitly drew off the sheet. I stood up.

"He got over it. Comes round and plays with my kids on Sundays," he said. "Comes in here every Friday, gets himself up. See him with a different one every week at the pictures. It's a dead place this, all right in the summer on the river. You make your own life. The only thing is he don't like shaving himself now, I have to go over every morning and do it for him."

He stood with his small grin, his steady eyes amused and resolute. "I never charge him," he said.

He brushed my coat, he brought my hat . . .

V. S. PRITCHETT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Time and the Conways," at The Duchess.

This perfectly straightforward play about a Midland post-war family suffers from the defect of dividing the scenes of the immediate post-war into two parts and sandwiching the only vivid piece of writing, the disillusionment of twenty years after, in between. But Mr. Priestley has been reading Mr. Dunne's *An Experiment with Time* in the train and has decided that here is a revelation of what a touch of hocus-pocus can do for the middle-brow. The result is that we have a padded first act of twitterings, an exceedingly well-written and moving middle act, which should have provided the climax of a really effective commentary on circumstance, and a last act containing the meat of the first act, which leaves the Conways bottled in a solution of what Mr. Priestley calls Time. For the theatregoer the middle act is the evening's entertainment, and structurally and dramatically it is very effective. The whole cast acts brilliantly, in particular Mr. Raymond Huntley as the self-effacing brother and Barbara Everest as the possessive, feckless mother, and the play is well produced with the exception of the monotony of Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson's gravitation towards the window to look out on the night stars. Someone behind us murmured "She's at it again," as she moved once more to draw back the curtains, but it was really Mr. Priestley moving to contemplate the vision he has vouchsafed himself of the non-existence of time.

"Action for Slander," at the London Pavilion

The only moral of this film seems to be: "Do not play cards with your mistress's husband." Major Daviot neglected this principle, was consequently accused of cheating, was persuaded by his friends not to take the matter to Court, was then cut by them for not doing so, and finally brought his slander action with triumphant success. The Tranby Croft case has been refurbished with an innocent protagonist and a vindictive cuckold. The film is taken from a novel by Miss Mary Borden, which we have not read. We cannot tell therefore who is responsible for the grotesquely unconvincing climax, which shows the villain quite unprepared with any reasonable account of the cheating incident. Nor do we know who is responsible for the rapier-like wit of the dialogue: "You make my head swim!" "That does not matter as long as I do not knock you off your bank balance!" Mr. Clive Brook stars with his accustomed polish and force, Miss Ann Todd looks very pretty in a poor part, Mr. Ronald Squire, Mr. Francis Sullivan, Mr. Frank Cellier, Mr. Arthur Margetson, and above all Mr. Felix Aylmer give excellent performances, yet the film, at least until its court-scene, continues to be uninteresting; and "like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along"—in other words it is an English film. "For the love of Mike, get on with it," one groans, as scene after unnecessary scene is conscientiously paraded in front of us. Mr. Tim Whelan, the director, is an import from America, but if slowness of movement is what the public want, it can be provided easily enough by native talent. And why must all English films give us outdoor scenes shot in the studio? Even in England the sun does quite often shine. With drastic cutting this film might make a tolerable entertainment. May we suggest to Mr. Whelan that he cable to Hollywood for his scissors which he seems to have left behind?

The Dust Bowl

The new *March of Time* reel consists of three excellent documentary films. The first is a picture of Poland, considered not as a picturesque survival of feudalism, but as the military State rebuilt by Pilsudski, and terribly conscious of the threat of Nazi Germany. The second sketches the miserable story of the large number of girls who, it seems, are attracted to New York by bogus advertisements offering good wages and sure jobs, only to find that neither exists, and the third, which will be a revelation to most English cinema-goers, gives authentic and unique pictures of large parts of the American continent, returning to desert as the top-soil blows away. The dust storm pictures are surprising and moving even to a townsman. It is only in the last few years that Americans themselves have begun to admit that bad farming and over-planting, lack of water conservation, and wholesale forest destruction have destroyed the soil over at least ten million acres and that much more of the United States is threatened with the same fate. (The Administration at Washington has published a pamphlet on soil erosion which asks the question, "Is America a permanent country?") This film of the Dust Bowl is worth seeing, both as photography and as a remarkable sociological document.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, September 3rd—
Exhibition of Camera Portraits, Royal Institute Galleries. Till September 15th.
"Marked Woman," Regal Cinema.

SUNDAY, September 5th—
Three Choirs Festival, Gloucester. Till September 10th.
"Van Gogh," Arts.

MONDAY, September 6th—
Trades Union Congress, Norwich.
"Richard II," Queen's.
Ballets Russes, Covent Garden.

TUESDAY, September 7th—
Lecture by Mr. Stephen Spender, St. Gabriel's Hall, Glasgow Terrace, S.W.1, 8.30.
"The Phantom Light," Haymarket.

WEDNESDAY, September 8th—
"Bonnet over the Windmill," New.

THURSDAY, September 9th—
Conference on Abyssinia, Central Hall, 10–6. Public Meeting, 7.30. Speakers include Lord Listowel, Sir George Paish, Miss E. Sylvia Pankhurst, Miss Monica Whately, and others.
"Carmilla," Westminster.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

CHARLES KINGSLEY, 1819–1875, by Margaret Farrand Thorp (Oxford University Press, 14s.) is an American biography of unusual merit. It has the appearance of being a thesis, but the author's scholarship never degenerates into pedantry or dullness. Nor, on the other hand, has she been deluded by her own interest in the subject into investing Kingsley with greater virtues than he possessed. "Most of the great literary figures of the nineteenth century," she says on her first page, "were rebels against or thinkers in advance of their time. Kingsley's influence was due in large part to his not being a thinker at all." I have been dipping into one after the other of his novels, and could not read through any of them. This is no doubt partly my own fault. (I have even attempted Henry Kingsley's *Ravenshoe*, which good judges consider superior to any of his brother's books; it is much more lively, but so childishly melodramatic that I gave up three-quarters of the way through.) Mrs. Charles Kingsley's *Life* of her husband has all the faults of the worst Victorian biographies, and consists chiefly of very uninteresting letters. But Kingsley is well worth the study, because no one was more eminently Victorian. Almost everyone who knew him liked him: he was high-spirited as well as high-minded; from sixty years distance, however, I find it difficult not to dislike him. His friend Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, describes him as:

> A great full-grown Newfoundland yearling dog out for an airing, plunging in and out of the water, and rushing against and shaking himself over ladies' silks and velvets, dandies' polished boots, or schoolboys' rough jackets.

This affectionate description seems extremely convincing.

* * *

Kingsley is kindly remembered because he was a "Christian Socialist" and a supporter of Darwin. He bravely called himself a Chartist (when Chartism was most feared and hated), and was temporarily inhibited for preaching a sermon reported to be subversive. The disgust with the condition of the urban and agricultural proletariat expressed in *Yeast* and *Alton Locke* and *Parson Lot's Letters* was profound. But Kingsley was never a Socialist, and became increasingly a Tory. "A true democracy such as you and I should wish to see is impossible without a Church and a Queen, and, as I believe, without a gentry." He feared that if the House of Lords were abolished the Government would "tend to tax the rich for the sake of the poor, with very ugly results to civilisation." His political faith could fairly be described as Disraelian. His Darwinism was more whole-hearted than his Radicalism. "Darwin is conquering everywhere," he writes, "and rushing in like a flood by the mere force of truth and fact." The readiness with which he accepted the new geological and biological theories made him a great comfort to a public distressed by the apparent antagonism between Science and Religion. It was a relief also to learn from him that the adjective "eternal" did not, when applied to punishment, signify "endless." There was, rightly, no doubt of the sincerity of Kingsley's religion; nor was it then generally perceived that he was exceptionally muddle-headed. He gaily put forward his peculiar view of Christianity as if it were not a paradox but a truism. He believed in Nature, manly courage, proper pride, physical exercise, cleanliness, the ennobling influence of women—all excellent things to believe in, but Kingsley really persuaded himself that these were the beliefs inculcated in the Christian Revelation. The asceticism which has been important in Christianity from its origin he dismissed with a favourite term of abuse as "Manichaean." The most insular of men, he disliked and despised Catholics, Dissenters, Tractarians, Evangelicals, the Irish, the French, and almost all foreigners. There was one exception. "Really," he wrote, "this Germany is a wonderful country—though its population are not members of the Church of England." He was enchanted with Sadowa, and said of the Prussian defeat of the French, "it will work good for generations to come." But then he had always been a firm believer in the good influence of war:

> A general war might, amid all its inevitable horrors, sweep away at once the dyspeptic unbelief, the insincere bigotry, the effeminate frivolity which now paralyses our poetry as much as it does our action, and strike from England's heart a lightning flash of noble deeds, a thunder peal of noble song.

A few months after writing this, he saw the outbreak of the Crimean War, and saw it with such pleasure that he started writing *Westward Ho!* to encourage the military spirit. "War in those days," some champion of Kingsley may urge, "was very different. Only professional soldiers and sailors engaged in it." This is true (though only of England). But, then, why should war be expected to have such a tonic effect upon non-combatants? Was reading in the newspapers about the sufferings of others supposed to be good for the character? Kingsley's personal courage was proved by his behaviour during the cholera epidemic, but it is difficult to contemplate without dismay his thirst for vicarious bloodshed.

* * *

Kingsley's life seems to have been a happy one—as lives go. He loved his wife, and Nature, with an enviable gusto. He was a most popular writer and preacher, he was Chaplain to Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales. He felt himself to be in the vanguard of progress, and he supposed that the world was progressing. Most men, as they grow old, see the decay of their own powers reflected in their environment, and are convinced that the country is going to the dogs because they are themselves going to the grave. But Kingsley believed that the Crimean War had redeemed the age. He had always perceived and preached the high moral importance of hygiene, and the horrors of the Crimean War did convert public opinion to the importance of hygiene, through the agency of Miss Nightingale. He lived to see the increase of cleanliness if not of godliness. But in one respect he was conspicuously unfortunate: he made a baseless charge against Newman. And *The Quarterly Review* justly prophesied that Kingsley "would go down to history as the fly in the clear amber of his antagonist's apology." Newman's answer, indeed, was so devastating that some people felt sorry for Kingsley: an impulsive sympathy with the man who was down made them forget that no one ever more entirely deserved to be downed. And because Newman's controversial skill was so immeasurably superior to his opponent's, they fancied that there was more to be said for Kingsley than Kingsley succeeded in saying. But if one studies the controversy from its beginning, it becomes clear, I think, that Kingsley collapsed because he had not a leg to stand on. His intellectual feebleness was no greater than his moral obtusity. In fact the two qualities were inextricably connected. He behaved like a cad because he thought like a fool. Miss Thorp's book includes a hitherto unpublished letter written by Kingsley after the appearance of the *Apologia*. "I have determined to take no notice," he says, "of Dr. Newman's apology." This at least was wise. But he continues:

> I cannot trust—I can only smile at—the autobiography of a man who (beginning with Newman's light, learning and genius) ends in believing that he believes in the Infallibility of the Church, and in the Immaculate Conception. If I am to bandy words, it must be with sane persons.

Newman must be a liar, because he cannot really believe what he says he believes. And Newman must be a madman, because he does believe what he says he believes. Kingsley makes the two mutually contradictory charges in consecutive sentences. The infidel observer may also wonder why it was a greater sign of madness in Newman to believe in the Immaculate Conception than in Kingsley to believe in the Virgin Birth. The former belief at least runs counter to no physical law with which we can be acquainted. If we shared

Kingsley's view that persons who believe what we find incredible must be mad, we should most of us be forced to think he was mad himself. A simpler and more probable view is that he was merely unimaginative to the point of stupidity.

* * *

Kingsley never tired of denouncing the duplicity and intellectual dishonesty of those with whom he disagreed; and doubtless he thought of himself as eminently straightforward. Yet his historical writings show a most culpable blindness to evidence. In his essay on Walter Raleigh, for instance, he out-Froudes Froude in the violence of his prejudices. Queen Elizabeth is a saint, and Charles I, who was so foolish as to die rather than abjure the Church of which Kingsley was a minister, is stigmatised as a "deliberate suicide." This attitude may be excused as the fruit of what theologians call "invincible ignorance." But it would require an ingenuity as great as that of the Jesuit casuists whom he denounced, to reconcile Kingsley's religious opinions with the doctrines proclaimed in the Anglican Articles and Liturgy. In his historical writings he persistently uses the word "Popish" to mean "untruthful, bigoted and morally debased," until at last he drives the exasperated reader into thinking of a "Popish" historian, who in truthfulness, impartiality and moral strength compares with him as day with night. But it is absurd to include in the same sentence the names of Kingsley and of Lord Acton. Kingsley's weak intellect was always the slave of his powerful emotions; and he took the violence of his feelings as a proof of their rightness. He approached the arts in a similar spirit. George Eliot is dismissed as "the infidel *esprit fort* who is now G. H. Lewes's concubine." The Italian Primitives are Manichaean; the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century playwrights, except Shakespeare and occasionally Ben Jonson, are utterly vile; and

> Let the poets of the new school consider carefully Wolfe's *Sir John Moore*, Campbell's *Hohenlinden*, *Mariners of England* and *Rule Britannia*, Hood's *Song of the Shirt* and *Bridge of Sighs*, and then ask themselves as men who would be poets, was it not better to have written any one of those glorious lyrics than all which John Keats has left behind him; and let them be sure that, howsoever they may answer the question to themselves, the sound heart of the English people has already made its choice.

One has to take Kingsley as a whole—a compound of comical prejudices and generous enthusiasms. He was self-opinionated beyond what is forgivable except in the uneducated. But it is impossible to separate his Philistinism and his insularity from his splendid indignation against those who neglected so grossly the public health. A Newfoundland dog, which has been bathing, shakes itself indifferently upon the just and the unjust.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

SPAIN AGAINST EUROPE

The Spanish Cockpit. By DR. FRANZ BORKENAU. *Faber.* 12s. 6d.

"Oh Spain!" So the exasperated Borrow used to begin his half-admiring, half-angry lamentations on the country which, after Ireland, has done more than any State in Europe to break the foreigner's heart. And so the reader who is not insulated from fact by party indignation will exclaim after putting down Dr. Borkenau's brilliant but depressing study of the present civil war. A detached inquiry by a distinguished sociologist, the book stands head and shoulders over anything which has yet been published; its fund of information is large, its manner almost elegant and its short interpretation of Spanish history since the low-water mark of the decadence in the early eighteenth century is the best thing that has been written on the subject for years. His shrewd but speculative chapter of conclusions may be open to question—he writes with the issue undecided—and one may object that he has got to know Spain so well that Spanish scepticism has got into his bones; but those first fifty pages, especially, and the diaries that follow have the root of the matter in them. Many illusions have been lost in this war already; we may save ourselves further losses after reading this book.

Our difficulty, of course, is that for us the importance of the struggle lies in its international aspect. Many writers have dealt with that. Dr. Borkenau has chosen the neglected and mysterious field of internal politics in the Government territory. And if the present military stalemate continues, internal politics will become very important. He would have gone to the Franco country also, but that General rather naively hopes to lull the British public into the belief that on his side the war is pure Tennyson and the Holy Grail with Queipo de Llano sitting in a kind of Sevillian Camelot. I cannot help feeling that some of Dr. Borkenau's conclusions about the revolution having missed the tide might have been modified if he had been in Franco territory. Obviously, Franco would not wish us to know that. If it is true, as Dr. Borkenau says, that the immense armed power of Fascism is altering the traditional course of erstwhile successful revolutions, then it is natural to look in the deluded rank and file of Fascism for the new kind of revolutionary possibility. However, this is not Dr. Borkenau's chief interest.

His main thesis is, first of all, what we all learn sooner or later as we get to know Spain: that for the Spaniards this is not a Fascist and anti-Fascist fight. And secondly, that the analogy with previous revolutions, the French and the Russian, is seriously undermined by the fact that the spontaneous rise of the Spanish masses, despite its revolutionary air, was really a national rising on the 1707 and 1808 models. The State for two centuries had been corrupt and weak, the Army unreliable, the Church—after it lost its land in 1837—a typical branch of Europeanised big business; an unbridgeable gap separated the upper class minority from the people; and when the State collapsed and the Army involved the foreigner, the only stable and powerful political force was the masses. They were the only sound reservoir of patriotism and Spanish tradition; and it was symptomatic of the State's decay that they had been able to provoke and dominate many crises in the last two or three generations.

Our difficulty, the difficulty of those of us who belong to Europe and the belief in progress, begins here, as Dr. Borkenau points out. The Spanish masses were unlike our proletariat. They belonged still to the Spain of the counter-reformation which had withstood all the characteristic European movements. They had risen as medievals against the enlightenment of the French. The upper

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classes, educated minorities and middle-class people here and there might profess liberalism and dabble in European idealism generally; the masses were impervious to the light. And their increasing rebellions which looked like efforts towards progress in our sense were not, as such rebellions have been with us, "a fight for better conditions inside a progressive capitalist system which they could admire," but "a fight against the first advances of capitalism, which they hated." The fight was against Europe. Hence the destructive quarrels on the Government side among those who profess European ideas—Socialism, Communism, etc.—and the extraordinary vitality of the native anarchism which is defeated over and over again but never seems to die. And hence, considered in terms of the modern world, the depressing lack of political creativeness in this so-called revolution; its failure to produce great men or a marked policy. Indeed, as Dr. Borkenau says, what policy there has been is imported. Very much the same case might be made against the Franco side.

Dr. Borkenau is inclined to blame the anarchists and the Trotskyites for ruining the revolution and the Communists for interring it. The peasant hasn't even got the land; there has not even been control of the simpler markets; the old and hated police are coming back; managers and owners have been shot, but things just go on very much as they were. Franco could have been submerged, Dr. Borkenau thinks, by a widespread social revolt in every village if the national had been expertly converted into the revolutionary. The diaries Dr. Borkenau brought back from his two visits—one was in last August, the other in the spring of this year—certainly vividly illustrate these points from his experiences in numbers of towns and villages. The obvious reply is that the Communists objected to socialisation not necessarily because Communism is a movement trying to bury its revolutionary past, but because they had to wage a defensive war with untrained men and inadequate material.

Dr. Borkenau admits this with a certain reluctance. Foreign intervention and Europe's terrible efficiency in modern war has indeed turned orthodox revolutionary argument into a tale of might-have-beens. The failure of the old Spanish guerilla tactics was a blow to the national rising; the success of Kleber was a blow to Spanish pride. The masses were beginning—Dr. Borkenau thought last spring—"to leave it to the foreigner." And if the old fire has gone out of the masses, the middle classes—if that is the term—are beginning to take more interest in a Government which stresses the word "legal" first and murmurs the word "democratic." It is significant that these middle-class people live, politically, under the domination of the foreigner.

I have set out the main lines of Dr. Borkenau's analysis. The reader will find the detail, with its account of the important Kleber crisis, the fall of Malága and the victory of Guadalajara, fascinating. There is an excellent portrait of La Passionaria and a wicked epigram about Caballero. *Plus ça change* . . . is the book's conclusion, a military dictatorship, a deal between Generals plus the new factor of foreign influence. And the intrusion of a foreign power means "a further step in the decay of Spanish civilisation." He could hardly be more pessimistic. Such pessimism seems premature. And one cannot help feeling that, like so many who have been exasperated or dumbfounded by the Spanish refusal to play the European game, Dr. Borkenau forgets, for the moment, that they may be playing one of their own. He himself remarks upon that tribal strength of Spanish society which enables it pretty well to dispense with a strong or even reputable central Government; and upon that love of liberty which, as much as any economic reason from Marxist analysis, provides the source of anarchism.

We have yet to see how the Franco side will split, or how much of the rotten structure of the old Spain can be patched up or survive. And, as Dr. Borkenau observes on his last page, progressive Europe is progressing so fast to its own destruction that the unorganisable Spaniard may have the last laugh yet.

V. S. PRITCHETT

REPLY TO GIDE?

Moscow, 1937. By LION FEUCHTWANGER. *Gollancz.* 2s. 6d.

In a recent book on Germany by an admirer of the Nazis there occurs the following passage:

> A German philologist said to me jokingly: "What more can you want? Democracy is government by the people; dictatorship government by an individual. But if this individual represents the people as ideally as is the case with us here, do not democracy and dictatorship become one and the same thing?"
>
> There is a serious side to this comment. Hitler-worship, the immoderate cult which the population makes of Hitler, is one of the first things that strike a foreigner visiting Germany.
>
> And yet (the writer continues) there can be no question that in the great majority of cases this idolatry is genuine. They do in truth believe that they owe to Hitler all they are and have. . . . They are grateful to Hitler for the creation of the German army to safeguard their new well-being. They are not grateful to an abstract "National Socialism," but to a tangible man, which is Hitler. Hitler is flesh of the people's flesh . . .

Perhaps some readers have already found me out. This is not a quotation from a book on Germany, but from Feuchtwanger's *Moscow*, 1937, with "Hitler" substituted for "Stalin," "Germany" for "Soviet Union," and "National Socialism" for "Communism." The sort of "joking" remarks that the Russian philologist made to Feuchtwanger are made every day in an equally "joking" spirit by hundreds of Germans in their conversation with foreign visitors; and these visitors are also expected to see "the serious side to this comment"—"the dictator represents the people ideally; therefore this *is* democracy."

I approached Feuchtwanger's book with an open mind, and—shall I confess it?—hopefully. I was told that this was "a reply to Gide." Gide has done incalculable harm to the Soviet Union. To thousands of Left-Wing people in this country and in France who, on the whole, admired the Soviet Union, Gide's book was a source of bitter disillusionment and a confirmation of their worst doubts. He denounced the mental standardisation of the Russian people, the smug ignorance of the young, the glaring inequalities between the new bourgeoisie and the rest of the people, the servile adoration of Stalin, the dangers of the Stakhanovite movement, and so on. I hoped that the author of *Jew Süss* would repair the damage, and show us that Gide's charges were unfounded, or, at any rate, greatly exaggerated.

I am disappointed. He makes no serious attempt to refute Gide; he does not oppose facts to Gide's facts; he does little more than express his own beliefs and convictions. In fact, he mentions Gide only two or three times; as, for instance, when he says that "Gide must have chanced upon exceptionally stupid and impudent young people." Maybe; but beyond that he produces no evidence that Gide's charges of smugness and mental standardisation are unfounded. His refutation of Gide's charge of Soviet conformism seems particularly feeble:

> The conformism of the Soviet people boils down to a general deep love of their homeland. Elsewhere this is simply called patriotism. When, for example, in England a fierce scuffle at a football match changes to general harmony as soon as the National Anthem is played, this is rarely called conformism.

But to return to the essential question of freedom and democracy—for Feuchtwanger does claim that Soviet Russia is becoming a free country, and he quotes extensively from the Constitution:

> Many people (he says) say that the Soviet Union is the opposite of democracy, and some even maintain that there is no difference between the Union and the Fascist dictatorships.

His reply to this is that:

> The Soviet Union forbids agitation in support of the principle that twice two is five, whilst Fascist dictatorships forbid active pursuit of the principle that twice two is four.

I don't know if anyone is impressed by this explanation. I am not. As regards the Constitution, he quotes extensively from Article 125, which guarantees not only freedom of speech and the press but also specifies what secures this guarantee: "The printing works . . . are placed at the disposal of the employables and their organisations." He, of course, admits that despite this great improvement on the West: "The position in regard to the freedom of the Press is by no means ideal." But, at the same time, he: "can understand that the Soviet Union does not wish to traverse precipitately *the little that is left of the way which still separates it from the consummation of the Socialist State.*"

Now, that seems a tremendously bold assertion, and I cannot see that the author produces any evidence in support of it. No doubt he quotes the Constitution, but says that, for the present the Government is obliged "to restrict the right of abuse," and to "parry foolish attacks"—why "foolish?" He also uses the familiar argument that the application of the Constitution has inevitably been retarded by the war menace. And yet, while he regrets the restrictions on literature, he attributes the poor quality of the literary output less to official bullying than to the "optimist conformism" of the writers themselves. What has Herr Feucht-

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wanger to say about the persecution of a great writer like Pilniak, or of a fine poet like Pasternak? He does not notice little things like that—just as he does not notice the absence of *Habeas Corpus*, and all that this means in Russia. In the circumstances it is a little grim to hear him exalt the great tolerance and broad-mindedness of Stalin:

> To me one small but illuminating detail makes manifest Stalin's superiority over Trotsky. Stalin gave instructions that a portrait of Trotsky was to be included in the big official *History of the Civil War*, edited by Gorki; Trotsky's book, on the other hand, has only hatred and contempt for Stalin.

Feuchtwanger's references to Stalin are oddly sentimental:

> They [the Trotskyists] hindered his work, resisted it, sabotaged. They were called to account, and their guilt was established. Stalin pardoned them and reinstated them in important positions. What must have been Stalin's thoughts and feelings when he found out that these, his colleagues and friends, despite the patent success of his work, still remained attached to his enemy?

Mr. Feuchtwanger, *soyons sérieux!* One really doesn't write history like that.

Such an introduction to his story of the Trotskyist trials does not really predispose one favourably to what is to follow. Feuchtwanger himself was "convinced of the guilt of the prisoners," though he admits that: "It would take a great Soviet poet to make their guilt and their sin comprehensible to Western minds." But while he records the extraordinary impression: "That the accused, prosecution and judges had the same, one might almost say sporting, interest in arriving at a satisfactory explanation of what had happened," he also quotes the Soviet authority who said to him: "We did not carry out this action for the benefit of foreign criminalists, but for the benefit of our own people."

I am not at all reassured by Feuchtwanger's book, and by his final explanation that:

> The Soviet Union presents two fronts: that of the fighting Union is the terrorist sternness with which it tramples all opposition underfoot; that of the constructive Union is in the democracy which it has shown in its constitution to be its ultimate goal.

I must add that there is one passage in Feuchtwanger's book which strikes me as not merely unsatisfactory, but outrageous. It is his reasons for believing in Trotsky's guilt. "If Alcibiades went to the Persians," he argues, "why not Trotsky to the Fascists?" And, after quoting a passage from *Coriolanus*, he glibly concludes: "This is Shakespeare's opinion on the likelihood of Trotsky's having come to an arrangement with the Fascists." And then he goes on:

> Trotsky's non-Bolshevist past is no accident. This is the opinion which Lenin expresses in his will on the likelihood of Trotsky's having come to an arrangement with the Fascists.

Really, Herr Feuchtwanger was wrong while he was at it, not to have called upon the testimony of Pushkin, Confucius and Beaumont and Fletcher.

In short, one is still willing to believe that Trotsky is guilty and that Stalin is justified; but Feuchtwanger has only increased one's scepticism.

A. B.

"Coming, Sir!"

Readers of the *New Statesman* will remember the two articles by a waiter, entitled "Charity Ball" and "Steward on the *Queen Mary*," which appeared last January. Messrs. Harrap now present the autobiography of the author of those articles, who is still employed as a waiter. In hotels and restaurants, in taverns and night-clubs, in cruising liners and speak-easies, DAVE MARLOWE has met with remarkable adventures, which he describes in vivid, forceful style. DESMOND MACCARTHY, who contributes a Foreword, says: "What took me aback was that so delicate a man, full of those quick intuitions and sensibilities bred of social contacts, should have led such a very rough-and-tumble life." The *Manchester Guardian* says: "The candid observations he makes concerning the conditions of work . . . should open people's eyes to a crying need of reform."

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NEWS FROM MLLE. MAILLART

Forbidden Journey. By ELLA MAILLART. *Heinemann.* 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

The Road to India. By PAUL MORAND. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

As you probably know, Mlle. Maillart is a Swiss journalist who travelled with Mr. Peter Fleming across Asia from Peking to Kashmir during 1935, and Mr. Fleming's account of their journey, *News from Tartary*, was published about a year ago. Now comes Mlle. Maillart's, and it is very nearly if not quite as good a travel book. When two travellers make the same journey together and both write about it afterwards one is naturally curious to know not only how they compare, but also what each has to say about the other, especially when the first one out is Mr. Fleming with his talent for apparently artless communication, for establishing a kind of casual intimacy between himself and his readers. He wrote appreciatively and affectionately about her and there was no reason to suppose she would write differently about him. Nor does she—though one review of *Forbidden Journey*, which I read before reading the book itself, hinted at discrepancies and archly refused to tell what Mlle. Maillart had to say about Mr. Fleming. In fact the only shadow of a complaint she has to make is that Mr. Fleming was in too much of a hurry. If they had been Baron Corvo and Dame Elinor Glyn or Mr. Wyndham Lewis and Miss Edith Sitwell, we might have been treated to a fantastic blast and counter blast, but they were, as readers of Mr. Fleming will already have gathered, exceptionally well suited as travelling companions. For those vulgar-minded people like myself who have a craving for personalities and gossip, what he said about her and what she said about him, here are a few scattered quotations from Mlle. Maillart about Mr. Fleming:

> I knew that I myself would not be intractable about any of the three questions that were liable to ruffle his calm. These were his pipe, his hunting and his opinions about dramatic art. . . .
>
> Peter in the meantime was discovering that in his own land a jubilee had been touchingly celebrated. I looked on as he showed everybody a photograph of George V in the *Times*, telling them that this was his king and this the very paper that had sent him amongst them. . . .
>
> But once more I was in admiration of Peter. . . . To be frank, I, who find everything difficult, felt as much envy as admiration of the easy, even the casual, manner in which Peter surmounted every obstacle that life put in his way. . . .

I have picked these at random and they give little indication of what a good travel book Mlle. Maillart can write—straightforward, objective, with a clear eye for detail both of people and landscape. They do, however, show a certain naivete which is possibly one of her advantages, for it seems to go with a capacity for feeling tremendous and quite genuine enthusiasm. As compared with Mr. Fleming's, her attitude is perhaps more conventional and she may be more anxious to impart information. She is less selective and is inclined to treat each incident in the same way, but though she has not got Mr. Fleming's easy fluency, she is intensely readable and succeeds in presenting their journey as a running narrative.

The journey itself was an astonishing performance and well worth having two books written about it. South by train from Peking to Sian; and, after a comparatively short lorry ride, the rest of the way on camel, horse and foot; across the far West of China; skirting the Kwen Lun Mountains north of Tibet; across the edge of the Takla Majan desert in Sinkiang, the buffer State between India, the Soviet Union, Tibet and Mongolia, and

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to enter which they had no official permission; from Kashgar south between the Pamirs and the Karkoram mountains to Hunza on the Indian frontier, and thence to Kashmir. The greater part of the route lay through politically unsettled territory and there was always the danger, which once or twice very nearly materialised, of their being stopped and sent back by local authorities. They had no escort, though for a short distance from Lake Koko Nor they travelled with a Mongol prince's caravan. It is impossible to give any adequate summary of a journey of such length and variety passing through such widely different regions. The going was often exceedingly hard, climatic conditions ranged from mountain cold to desert heat, and both of them must have been very tough physically. There were innumerable minor incidents, but nothing ever went really wrong. Mlle. Maillart describes it all faithfully stage by stage, providing a good deal of information about the confusions of Central Asian politics following on the far-reaching effects of the war and the Russian Revolution. Three years before she had travelled from Moscow to the border of Chinese Turkestan, and one of her expressed aims at the beginning of the book was to compare local conditions with Russian Turkestan. I didn't notice her make this comparison, though when dealing with the situation in Kashgar and the possibilities of Soviet penetration in Sinkiang she seems to be a little less agitated than Mr. Fleming. The last stage of the journey from Kashgar to Kashmir through magnificent mountain scenery must have been one of the pleasantest, but Mlle. Maillart, like so many writers of travel books when they near the end, rather hurries through it, as if she were already homesick for the bare plateaux of Central Asia. Elsewhere in the book, however, she shows very sensible appreciation of comfort and succeeds in communicating it. There are a great many photographs, most of them very good. Incidentally, full marks to Mr. McGreevey for his translation.

The Road to India is a series of very short, very superficial, very banal sketches about the Near East, Palestine, Egypt, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The general theme is a curious combination of the Romance of the bewitching Orient and the Romance of the Mighty British Empire. You will search in vain for throbbing descriptions of oriental night life. M. Morand seems to be through with all that: "Port Said," he says, "is modest and very easily shocked." He hops along from place to place, providing a little history, a little geography and a few trite impressions. Now and again he offers a tit-bit of "inside" political information, of which the following is the most fantastic sample: "While we are asking ourselves whether our aeroplane workshops shall be moved to Chartres or Mons our British neighbours are preparing to move their war industries to India, to South Africa, or better still to Newfoundland where fogs will protect them from enemy aircraft." The translation is vile, but I cannot imagine why the book was ever translated at all.

MAURICE RICHARDSON

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The *Manchester Guardian* critic who wrote the above words goes on to commend this study of the legend of the lost Atlantis as "Sane, clear and readable." Edward Shanks in the course of a long review in the *Observer* last Sunday says:—"He writes with temperance and discretion and wit. He has much learning."

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Professor Hentig shares with his fellow-exile, Professor Heinrich Mannheim, the reputation of being one of the two leading students of scientific penology—a science almost unknown in this country—in the old Germany. This book is worthy of his reputation. It digs deep into the magical and historical roots of punishment through the ages with a width of knowledge and a sureness of insight that are alike remarkable. Formally, it avoids the kind of practical recommendation dear to the heart of the British reader. It provides the background within which our penological methods must be assessed. But by a skilful relation of that background to modern practice, Professor Hentig is able to show how completely unscientific most of them are. Reform in this field is notoriously slow; and books of this calibre are long in making their way. But on a long-term view this is the kind of book which helps greatly in evolving a new approach to the problems we so consistently refuse to face. It is a great thing to have it available in so admirable a translation.

Certain conclusions emerge from Professor Hentig's discussion which are worth emphasising. He disposes completely of the usual arguments for the death penalty, for flogging, and, in an especially interesting chapter, for sterilisation. But, even more important, he offers a critique not only of the ordinary prison system, but also of our methods of assessing punishment, which I believe to be unanswerable. It will, indeed, one day seem remarkable that lawyers and administrators, alike wholly untrained in psychology or medicine or sociology, should have the immense power in their hands that the right to sentence implies. It will seem still more remarkable that, after his elevation to the Bench, we take no pains to exact from the judge, whether lay or legal makes no difference, any obligation to acquaint himself with the results of the immense power he exercises. Nor do we consider with any seriousness the effect of punishment of individuals by imprisonment on either their immediate environment or on the larger world of which they are a part. No official attempt is made to study the effects of our prison system on the prisoners; and the main work of the Prison Commissioners is shrouded in a secrecy for which there cannot possibly be any justification. Prison reform is, at best, crude and haphazard. Much of it seems to depend on the scandal of a prison outbreak, like Dartmoor, the revelations of men like Mr. Wilfred Macartney or the accident that a rare Home Secretary can be persuaded into an interest in the subject.

Our system of punishment, in fact, shows both officialdom and public opinion at their worst. The great value of Professor Hentig's book is that it provides an overwhelming case for the recognition that the national endowment of penological research is an urgent public obligation. The universities have done practically nothing for the subject; Professor Mannheim's election, two years ago, to a research fellowship in the University of London was, I believe, the first and still solitary recognition it has received. A really civilised society would long ago have understood that investigation of the kind that he is doing is, within the framework provided by books like Professor Hentig's, the necessary condition not merely of successful prison administration, but of justice itself. We philosophise about the effects of punishment in the abstract; we do not bring our high theories to the tests of scientific proof. We talk much nonsense on deterrence, the educational effects of the petty changes we make from time to time; the truth is that the whole is a wild hit-or-miss method which is tolerated only because society is largely prevented from knowing what savagery is committed in its name.

H. J. LASKI

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THE BODLEY HEAD

BRIGHTER ANTHROPOLOGY

Hot Strip Tease : and Other Notes on American Culture. By GEOFFREY GORER. *Cresset Press.* 6s.

This is a brightly written, briskly self-confident book. Mr. Gorer, it seems, spent four-and-a-half months in New York a couple of years ago, and spent them to advantage. "My working hours," he tells us, "were occupied with primitive cultures, reading about them, and later writing about them . . . during my leisure I had a very pleasant time indeed, meeting a number of interesting and charming people." And in the course of these anthropological studies it came over him that it might be possible "to describe complicated civilisations by the same methods as those used for materially primitive ones." Thus, confronted by the startling fact that a man will make love to an American girl and then back out of it when she wants to carry things to a logical and perhaps embarrassing conclusion, Mr. Gorer quietly remarks: "Here I think another culture can help us—the Marind-Anim, almost the nearest neighbours of the Kiwai, on the other side of the Fly River." "Help" is the operative word. Mr. Gorer is nothing if not modest. He lays it down that "one possible method of approach to the investigation of Western culture seems to me to lie in the study of institutions, the people who use them and the effect it has on them." There are, as he admits, a great number of these institutions—"various churches, schools and colleges, public libraries, sports meetings, all sorts of clubs, political parties, hospitals, trade unions, social and philanthropic organisations, theatres, cinemas, the wireless—all the numerous foci of social life." But out of them all, as an approach to understanding this quite considerable culture, he chooses to investigate the "strip-tease" acts in the burlesque shows of New York. If these had any authentic or truly autochthonous quality, well and good—from the point of view of anthropology. But they haven't. The "strip-tease," as now exploited, is a mere accretion on the far more rumbustious fleshliness of the traditional American burlesque. And even if it weren't, it is hard to see what illumination Mr. Gorer has gained from this flimsy material. Such generalisations as he makes do not give one the impression of being derived very clearly from these researches in the burlesque theatres, but of being merely tacked on to them. In fact, it looks as if "anthropology" and "field work" and "interlocking institutions" may become danger-signals of a new pretentiousness.

It is fair to say that Mr. Gorer has on occasion a good descriptive touch, when he is just reporting things seen or heard: witness the few pages dealing with a rich and vulgar ball at the Waldorf-Astoria. The two narratives taken from the life, which make up the last eighty pages of the book, waver rather uncertainly between document and fiction, and so are rather unconvincing as either. However, as the blurb says, they describe "the impact of American *mores* on individuals," which is a stylish way of labelling quite straightforward anecdotes; and that brings us round to the "field work" view of life again.

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SANCTUARIES AND ALPS

A Gardener's Testament. By GERTRUDE JEKYLL. Edited by FRANCIS JEKYLL and G. C. TAYLOR. *Country Life.* 10s. 6d.

The Present-Day Rock Garden. By SAMPSON CLAY. *T. C. and E. C. Jack.* 31s. 6d.

Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith once told delightfully in *Life and Letters* (June, 1933) how Gertrude Jekyll revived the old word "armigerous"—to describe the class of society to which she belonged. In the world of gardening, Miss Jekyll was a warrior in her own right, and even in this selection of articles on plants and gardens, contributed to various journals during the latter part of her life, the character of that "armigerous old Amazon" sticks out. Like her contemporary, William Robinson, Miss Jekyll knew her own mind, as those people foolhardy enough to cross her path frequently discovered. But she knew more than her own mind; she knew her subject. "I have never written a line," she says in the first article of this volume—entitled *About Myself*—"that was not accounted for by actual work and experience." Her defective eyesight was even turned to account. "I am thankful to have been able to cultivate a habit of close observation, so that even with my bad eyes I can often detect objects and effects that well-sighted people have passed unnoticed."

It is unfortunate that although there are many more gardeners to-day, relatively few have the opportunity of gardening on the scale Miss Jekyll's text often implies, but this should not deter anyone from reading *A Gardener's Testament*, for whether she is dealing with old gardens or new, borders, colour, roses or annuals, they will learn something besides obtaining an insight into that greater experience and wisdom which, in her case, followed knowledge.

The selection is made by Mr. Francis Jekyll, her nephew, and Mr. G. C. Taylor. In an unsigned preface (written in the first person) one of the editors explains that he has altered a word here or there for the sake of clearness. He might at times have taken more care; for instance, on page 209, "Hollyhock seed . . . may still be sown *now*"—and one has to turn to the chapter title to discover that this is late February. The volume is illustrated with many half-tone photographs taken at Munstead Wood.

Alpine gardeners will rejoice at the long-awaited publication of *The Present-Day Rock Garden*. For many years the standard book on Rock Garden plants has been Farrer's *English Rock Garden*, and this volume is complementary to it. Since the earlier book was written, plant hunters have been busy and vast territories searched and re-searched. The gaps in Farrer needed filling in, hence this monumental work of seven hundred pages. A description of the volume must, in this case, be offered in place of detailed criticism, for it may be many years before the experts complete the picking of the crows experts delight in finding. The arrangement of the volume is alphabetical, a method admirably suitable as it makes possible quick reference and avoids bulky indexes. Dr. Clay in an interesting preface clearly explains the principles which have determined inclusion or omission. There will probably be raising of eyebrows at some of the inclusions, and grumbles at the omissions, but there are limits even to what can be packed into a volume of this size. A hundred well-produced half-tone photographs illustrate the volume and, since all have been taken abroad and many by distinguished plant hunters, the name of the photographer and place given as a caption to each plate add much to their interest. Every serious rock gardener will somehow manage to beg, borrow or steal the moderate price to own this book.

R. G. E. WILLISON

STUDYING AT HOME for a UNIVERSITY DEGREE

By the Rev. JOHN PITTS, M.A., Ph.D. (Lond).

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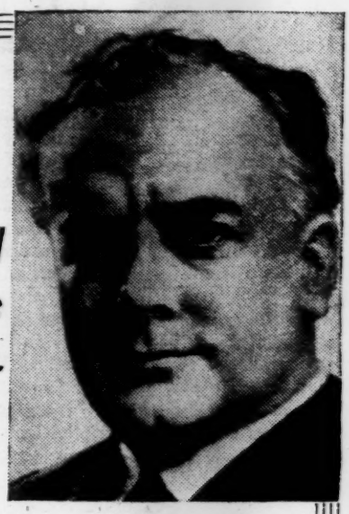

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NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

EXCEPT ONLY HERMAN——

Industrial Art in England. By NIKOLAUS PEVSNER. *Cambridge University Press.* 16s.

No one can deny, or would wish to deny, Dr. Pevsner's integrity, his industry, the value of his research into the relationship between manufacturer and designer, his fairness to England in his survey of modern applied art. All that side of his book is done admirably, if without humour, and it will remain the standard work of reference as a summary of the conditions of mass production and all that it implies. There emerges in concrete fact what has been apparent for many years, that the main difficulty in the production of well-designed objects at moderate prices lies in the almost complete indifference of the manufacturer to any new impulse of invention and a distaste for recognising the importance of an architect or artist who is in relationship with the social structure of our times. But all inquiries of this kind can be divided into two parts, facts and results, and it is in the question of results that we must probe the motive power behind the conclusions and consider the implications of the trend of thought of Dr. Pevsner. It is time that we should see how Germanic this is and how the prospect it holds out may turn in the end to a steam-roller threatening the existence of any private environment. All art depends on a social background, and the taste of the consuming public is controlled by its most active members. These are at present the younger generation, and I am not sure that in assessing the ultimate value of Dr. Pevsner's school the younger generation will not turn the tables on him. I do not deny that his crusade is on the right lines, but it offers a practical solution in one direction only. Now in all questions of this kind it is only the immediate thirty years that is really of vital importance, and I hope that such a period will see the passing of the fetish of no ornament which his school favours.

In spite of the Totalitarian successes in Europe, it is individualists whom one may expect to do most with their lives, whether for public or personal good, in this world of uncertainties, and it is certainly they who stimulate among their elders, and not always their betters, the feeling that the future is not without hope, even if we do live in an age when a girl can shake Mr. Robert Taylor by the hand and say, "I'll never wash that hand again." Now this individualism is part of an old-fashioned thing—our national characteristic. Another part of that characteristic is still strongly alive—anyone who has had to persuade a Darby and Joan to move into a Council flat knows that—a person's pride in his home. This form of dragooning everyone into hives of perfectly regular cells is a political as well as an architectural intrusion on our integrity, and it is to the great credit of the individualist that the tide is beginning to turn against the big block of flats in favour of the small house. For these perfectly regular, mass-produced rooms tend to stultify original design and force concentration on "fitness of purpose," and it is going to be a pretty dull world if people cannot realise that enthusiasm for a plain glass rod is a straightforward denial of romanticism.

If we wish to be really unkind, let us look at Port Nuffield, for so we may term the ideal town to which Dr. Pevsner's school is leading us. Here are Nos. 45 and 46 with their children, 45A and B and 46A. They have just had lunch off plain china (a change in taste in the Royal Household (see page 76) has brought this about) and are about to go out. It is a winter day, but they do not go to the cinema; that would prove them Escapists (see page 11). They would like a new fire, for they have discovered by experience that their old one gives too much heat directly in front and has little diffusion. Fires are chosen by one criterion only, fitness of purpose (page 20). Their model therefore does not fulfil its function; the old electric copper bowl which did would be better. But no, after consulting Pevsner (page 22) they find that it was not bad looking, but obviously conceived as a heating machine exclusively. A little bewildered, they therefore go and buy a Portcullis with its artistic grid-iron radiant, somewhat shattered when 45A points out that from his work in school he thinks the design a Tudor imitation. At the Central Depot for Approved Designs they spend an idle hour looking at wall-papers, woven stuffs, etc., and fill in a questionnaire as to their preferences, thus becoming Exhibitionists. They buy themselves, perhaps, a plain glass sherry set, and return to their plain home.

Mr. Noel Carrington, in the best book written to date on Industrial Art, has convincingly shown that the arts are dependent for their development in style on the social conditions of their age. Everyone agrees that the world is at present in that state so admirably described by Mr. Joxer as "chassis," and the style at present in course of development may well prove ephemeral. If we look at such things as Mr. Harold Stabler's silver tea-set on its bakelite stand (Plate 16) we see that the new style can be comparable in its disagreeable qualities to *art nouveau*. The defect for me of the Pevsner school is that it brings its *apparatus criticus* to bear in the first place, its eye in the second. The reverse process seems to me the proper standard and if, as I hope, when the pot has boiled, the individualists are going to have a run for their money, Port Nuffield will be doomed.

L. ANDREWS

Many Sides

THERE are people who keep no banking account, and there are those who *merely* keep an account. To pay in one's cheques or dividends, and to draw out for one's needs, are right and obvious uses of a bank; these are first essentials. But, if a bank has kept step with the times and still retains its background of a century's tradition, it must at least have become many-sided. It is to popularize the many-sidedness of the Westminster Bank that a small booklet is issued named *Thirty-nine Advantages*, copies of which may be had at the counter of any branch office.

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Rare Poems of the XVII Century. Ed. by L. BIRKETT MARSHALL. *Cambridge University Press.* 7s. 6d.

Conventional anthologies suffer from the same disabilities as an all-star matinée: none of the performers can operate on an adequate scale, and within the cramping limits imposed by overlavishness each is confined to his most familiar tricks and idiosyncrasies. Mr. Marshall, however, has had the wisdom to call in the "extras": not the Prince Hamlets, but the attendant lords. His use of the word "rare" is abundantly justified; he has passed beyond the Sedleys and Withers to truly minimal poets whose very names are in most cases unfamiliar. As a voyage of discovery in a most fascinating limbo this anthology is an admirable novelty. My only regret is that the poems are not arranged in chronological order, since alphabetical arrangement is as chaotic as drawing the names out of a hat.

What is first apparent is the versifying skill of professional men, notably of doctors and clergy. There are not many poems of substantial worth in the book, but the aftermath of Tudor verse seems to have produced a general interest in the art of versification. It is, I think, always true that when a people comes to a point of articulate creative achievement the succeeding generations find themselves in possession of a cultural capital which they proceed to consolidate and refine. In seventeenth-century England the *habits* of civilisation reached a wider and more stable class than hitherto. The intensity of concentration was diminished, but the

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practice of poetry became a criterion of manners among men of humane pretensions. In the verse that Mr. Marshall has collected we find secondary and tertiary intellectual activities cast in verse form. It becomes an almost critical activity to familiarise oneself with the craft of verse.

The changes of fashion through the century are well illustrated. Donne is a favourite model, notably for Beedome's

> Yes, yes, it must be so, but must there be,
> When you depart, no memory had of mee?

The brief line and closely woven syntax of devotional poetry follows, and elsewhere there are admiring plagiarisms of individual poems. Wither's *The Manly Heart*, with its repeated "What care I how fair she be?" is borrowed by a friend who writes "What care I though she be fair?" The cavalier love-lyric is a popular favourite, the increasingly polished and fluent couplet of a later period begins to emerge in Rowland Watkyns's

> Who now in Court doth dance and lift his head,
> To-morrow droops, and sickly keeps his bed.

And a lady flourishing in 1679 under the pseudonym of Ephelia strikes the authentic *bas bleu* note in a severely platonic overture to her man-friend. Another pervasive and growing style is the pastoral glorification of rural retirement, which touches romantic heights in Robert Chamberlain's "warbling Swallow": a bird of presumably sweeter song than the modern monotonous twitterer.

It is fortunate that Mr. Marshall has had the patience and the curiosity to prepare this volume, since it would probably have remained undone but for him. His only mistake, if I am right in saying so, is to print as original a poem by Fane which seems to me to be a translation of Martial. Inevitably he has found more geese than swans, but a dozen of his poets deserve to be better known. Beedome, Coppinger, George Daniell, Lathum, Master and Watkyns would repay further study, and Henry Hawkins has more virtues than the possession of a "fust-class name." This is a charming collection, and it deserves not to be dismissed merely as a literary curio. A. DESMOND HAWKINS

SHORTER NOTICES

International Relations Since the Peace Treaties. By E. H. CARR. *Macmillan.* 6s.

Mr. Carr is known as a diplomat who became a professor. Though written in a dreary style, his book is useful for—superficial—reference, and also (despite its apparent "objectivity") as a good presentation of the Foreigh Office point of view at its smuggest. Take a few examples. *Manchuria:* "This was an exceptional case. . . . The distances were too great. The framers of Article 21 had wisely recognised the regional character of security. . . . The abnormal status of China justified the failure to apply strict League rules." *The Hoare-Laval Plan:* "In December France became apprehensive that an Italian failure in Abyssinia might react on the situation in Central Europe. The British Government seems to have shared this fear. . . ." Here is a clear suggestion that it was the French who first proposed a settlement on the lines of the Hoare-Laval plan. Hoare—more sinned against than sinning; we seem to have heard that before. *The Berlin-Rome axis:* "Seems particularly unstable"—a belief which has played havoc with British policy in the last year.

On certain points of detail Mr. Carr goes wrong, for instance, when he says that non-intervention was first proposed on August 15th. Actually, it was proposed much earlier. But, above all, Mr. Carr sins by omission. He conveniently fails to explain how non-intervention arose; earlier in the book he ignores Britain's consistent objection to adequate armaments control—an objection which was one of the principal causes of the failure of the Disarmament Conference; and he says nothing about the peace ballot which did so much to force upon Sir Samuel Hoare a policy which was distasteful to him—and to the permanent F.O. officials—from the outset, and which he discarded at the first convenient opportunity, that is, after the Election victory. Nor does he say how the oil embargo was buried. Although Mr. Carr rightly emphasises the lamentable effect of the Four-Power Pact on Polish policy, his explanation of the Polish-German *rapprochement* seems unduly crude, as is also his account of the Belgian "neutrality declaration."

African Odyssey. By W. ROBERT FORAN. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

Life of Commander Verney Lovett-Cameron, the first European to cross Africa from East to West. Cameron is not now so well remembered as other African explorers, but there is no doubt his exploits were as worthy of fame; if there is any good in perpetuating the memory and courage of such men this is a valuable book. Its scientific and anthropological value has already been covered by other books; as an adventure story it is too detailed to be continuously exciting. There are, however, long quotations from Cameron's five volumes of diary. These are meticulous in describing the appearance, life and activities of the natives, but otherwise unimaginative and restricted in their interests by Victorian prudery. Cameron himself was a "brave and straightforward English gentleman," honest in the dealings he personally supervised and never doubting the value of the civilisation which followed the trail he blazed. Yet it was largely due to his reports that many of the notorious companies of the Belgian Congo were formed. He was a director of the Katanga Company. Major Forhan does not doubt that everything was done for the best and is amazed that anyone should doubt the value of European civilising to the natives; on this point it is easier to excuse Cameron than his biographer. A painstaking memorial to a hero.

South African Cinderella. By REX HARDINGE. *Herbert Jenkins.* 15s.

Story of a trek across ex-German West Africa, mostly on a bicycle, probably a record ride under such difficulties. Like all travel books written by humane but not very accomplished or learned author-adventurers, contains a lot of irrelevant personal reminiscence, some interesting stories and impressions of tribal life and pitiful descriptions of the ill-treatment of natives by Europeans. Mr. Hardinge was so disgusted by the tales of German savagery told to him by the natives, and afterwards verified by documentary evidence which he investigated, that he devoted the last part of his trek to proving the unfitness of the Germans to colonise. The destruction of native communal life by the Germans, he maintains, has reduced most of the tribes of the Mandated Territory to such apathy that more beneficial legislation has scarcely any effect on them. The struggle against Europeans has exhausted them. On this point the book is interesting. Three long appendices containing excerpts from official reports on Nazi activities in the Territory and proposed administrative reforms; 20 photographs and index.

About Motoring

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Panhard. There was a brief interim when Charles Knight persuaded Daimlers and other privileged firms to try the sleeve-valve engine, but the poppet valve resented the intrusion, and fought the sleeve valve back into the obscurity from which it sprang. To-day the poppet valve recognises a new and doughtier rival in the Aspin rotary valve.

The poppet valve suffers from a thousand weaknesses; its face burns; its springs break or weaken; it is only fully open for a fraction of its period of duty; it bounces; it clacks—altogether it is astounding that it works at all, especially the exhaust valve, which subsists in a welter of flame, and miraculously contrives not to melt. We have, of course, heard much of rotary valves in the past—disc rotary valves, barrel rotary valves, and many others. But the Aspin is a cone valve; and incidentally, the cone is also the combustion chamber. Imagine a perfectly normal cylinder barrel, cooled by water jacket or finning, as you prefer. Close its upper end with a bolt-on cylinder head, shaped rather like a squat candle-extinguisher. Inside this candle-extinguisher insert a second cone, of identically similar contour, but microscopically smaller, since it will be called upon to spin inside the fixed candle-extinguisher at fantastic speeds—Mr. Aspin thinks nothing of 10,000 revolutions per minute.

How does it spin? I should have said that the inner cone has a rod machined integral with its thin end; this rod protrudes through a hole in the peak of the fixed cone, and on the protruding end of the rod is a tiny gear wheel, suitably driven off the engine. The inner or rotating cone is partially solid, formed of a light steel shell, into which a body of light alloy is fixed. This cone is partially cut out to form a rotating combustion chamber, connected by one port in the base of the cone with the cylinder barrel—through this port the explosion hits the piston a mighty wallop—and connected by a second port in its sloping side with the inlet and exhaust ports cut in the sloping side of the fixed candle-extinguisher or cylinder head. The seal between moving and fixed cones is by oil, fed from the usual lubrication pump.

I had almost forgotten to mention the sparking plug. On our much-abused cars the poor sparking plug resides continuously in the combustion chamber, where it is permanently exposed to heat, to oil, to any wet petrol hopping about in the gas charge; so that it is apt to express a natural resentment by becoming fouled or blistered or white hot. On the Aspin engine the sparking plug lives quietly in its own private cubby hole, subject only to the periodic shock when the rotating cone passes an open port momentarily across it, and the spark provokes a leaping inferno of flame.

This design has many merits. The designer enjoys a lavish control of his valve action. He is not tied down to the eccentricities of the miserable poppet valves, which no sooner open by gradual degrees than they shut again in similar fashion, not to speak of their being strictly limited in size, whilst their weight and the vulnerability of their springs are a perpetual nuisance. He can machine his ports in reliance on pure ideal. He can inject a gigantic charge of gas, and what with the slicing effect of the revolving port, and the whirling of the revolving head, and the transverse push of the flying piston from beneath, he attains a most desirable turbulence in his gas charge, which is far better mixed than any cocktail. As a result, when the spark poops it off, it expands with a fluidity like Henry Cotton's golf swing.

You may suppose that ordinary engines burn their gas all in one fell bang, so to speak. But they don't! Their gas charge too often resembles a layer cake or a spotty plum-duff, blobs of air and wet petrol being only half intermingled before the charge is fired. The effect of this Aspin turbulence is to give an amazingly smooth and potent shove per unit of fuel consumed. Notice the symmetry of this Aspin cylinder head! Are engineers artistic? Seldom. But an asymmetrical business end to an internal combustion chamber produces uneven heating—read the claims that introducers of 1938 cars make for their cooling systems. But when they have said their say, their cooling is still a mere compromise, camouflaged by low compression, and special jets of water, and the like. The Aspin engine has no hot spots; hence it can be set to run at compressions and speeds which are unknown outside the race track at present, and which even there fill up the "dead car park" with three-fourths of the entry by the time a race is half run.

Of course, the insidious question about all rotary valves is whether they prove reliable in use, especially in respect of wear and of compression leaks. Well, Mr. Aspin commenced his research very modestly with a motor-bicycle engine of no more than 250 c.c.—about one-third the size of a baby Austin engine.

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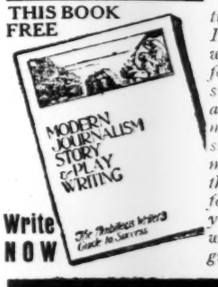

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New Statesman and Nation, 4/9/37.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM
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He ran it for hundreds of hours at thousands of revolutions, and encountered no snags which he could not sidestep. He is now busy with an aero engine. In the Great War the first column in the data sheets of the Air Ministry's secret engines gave their weight per h.p., and anything under 3 lb. per b.h.p. sent a quiver through the Hotel Cecil. The Aspin air engine develops 80 b.h.p. in its raw infancy; scales 130 lb.; and functions on remarkably small fuel rations. If a sister engine were undergoing development for road work, it would develop not 80 h.p. but perhaps 150 h.p., for propellers simply carve a vacuum in the atmosphere if they are asked to run at the speed of a motor-car engine.

It is quite possible that this new engine and the name of its inventor may become household words before we are much older, and may go down to history with Watt and Stephenson and Daimler, as introducing a new epoch in power transport. The inference seems irresistible if the rotary valve produces no unsuspected snags.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 390

Set by Frederick Laws

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best letters of application for the post of English master in a small public school, of companion to an old lady, or of reviewer on the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION Entries not to exceed 300 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, September 10th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of the last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 388

Set by G. W. Stonier

Everyone has his blind-spots in literature. Perhaps you detest Flaubert, Shelley or Goethe. Usual prizes for the best entries (not more than 250 words) indicating your loathing of some great master —not necessarily one of the above—and giving your reasons.

Report by G. W. Stonier

Good haters may not make good critics, but they make for lively reading. Blake, Carlyle, Léon Bloy, Wyndham Lewis; there is something to be said for the Thersites in literature. But my competitors were discreet, argumentative, confessional; and I wish they could have been livelier. Suppose, after sitting down to give their reasons for loathing Shakespeare, Jane Austen and Dickens (the favourites), they had paused to apply another test: Now, how can I hope to get that half-guinea? Many of them would then, I feel sure, have recognised that they were not answering an examination paper but undertaking a piece of journalism. Some flat admissions might have been eliminated.

> There is too much self-pity about the writing of Charles Dickens for my liking. (Whitby Scott.)

A poor beginning? Well, that's all there is of that one. Nicholas Moore, on Milton, is briefer and rather better:

> I hate that proud and savage-mouthed sadist.

That shapes for a phrase, and how few of those who attempted brevities even got so far! From some of the longer entries it is possible to extract liveliness:

> Conrad: Too much East and not enough east wind. (R. Cecil Owen);

but the epigrams are not many. Two approaches accounted for failure. Either the competitor was sincerely resentful of a particular master without quite knowing why, or—and this was distressingly common—from a bouncing dislike of literature he fastened on the writer who had bored him most. Shakespeare was the target of those who had never enjoyed poetry; Hardy and Ibsen were abused for not being anodyne; and one competitor attacked Milton because "he wrote nothing which does not require imaginative attention sustained at a higher level and for longer than is natural." Oh, oh: what if I forwarded these replies to Dr. I. A. Richards of Cambridge? Some of the confessions, though, are as delightful as they are frank. A Dickens-hater ends with a P.S.:

> It is reliably reported that when the instalment recording Little Nell's death came out my grandfather wore black for a week. Perhaps this may be the explanation for my particular blind-spot. (Brutus.)

A very good explanation too, and if Brutus had submitted that instead of his quite reasonable little essay on Dickens he might have deserved a prize. I liked, too, the Dorsetman who, to augment his love of Dorset, attempted *Tess*, the actor for whom Ibsen was the most detestable of dramatists because he found the cues awkward, and Joan Jukes's introduction to Victor Hugo:

> I have never believed Hugo was a great poet because I was introduced to him by an amiable French master with shiny shoes, who skimmed over the floor shouting "Waterloo! Waterloo! Waterloo!" so that one extended one's tolerant amusement to the great Victor himself.

Many, of course, disliked Shakespeare for the association with matric., annotators, amateur theatricals, birthday books, and precocious visits to "Sir Frank Benson and his merry men." Jane Austen was blamed for the Janeites, Browning for the Browning Society. When competitors gave a *personal* reason it was usually interesting and to the point. At times I could make nothing of their critical reasoning. Pibwob's remark that Tolstoy has "a crabbedness that outmanners Meredith at his crossest ways" leaves me guessing; it is so idiosyncratic that one would have to know all Pibwob's feelings about Meredith as well as Tolstoy to understand how they could possibly have come together in his phrase. The competition, so far as prize-giving goes, was disappointing. Good abuse as well as good criticism was lacking. There was some incidental liveliness. "X" (address please) was easily the best, and his piece on Henry James is brilliantly two-edged; second, after some deliberation, I would bracket William Bliss and Nicholas Moore.

FIRST PRIZE

If Henry James ever keeps a speak, I am not one of his customers. I am a guy that reads more than somewhat, but Henry's merchandise is harder to take in than Good Time Charley's. And I don't mean maybe. Indeed, if I see one of Henry's tales coming, I haul off and walk away, because he is a guy from whom I get no literary scratch. I never give the large hello to the guys or dolls in his pieces. They have too much tongue, and however long they snow I cannot get their drift, so what is the use of me going around with them? I will only wish to poke them in the smush. There is a writing guy that says Henry is like a hippopotamus picking up a pea. That seems right to me. Let him get on with it. But me, I am no piker. I like to run around with simple, tough guys that have a guy's slant on dolls and guys. I do not care to see a guy all tangled up in his mind over a thin dime. I get sored up. So that is how Henry strikes me. I do not mind playing the chill on him like this, because he never packs a Betsy, and even if I try to cool him off he will just argue with me till I am daffy. Also he dies quite a while back. But I still wish he is never born.

X.

SECOND PRIZE (1)

EDMUND SPENSER (*of Ireland and Wardour Street*)

When he christened Spenser "the Poet's Poet" Charles Lamb said the only unintentionally foolish thing he ever said.

Spenser has lived on that phrase ever since for, being all snobs, we like to think we can taste what is caviare to the general.

Allegories are always pretentious, but Spenser needn't have written the Faery Queen in order to tell the world he had read Aristotle.

His Ethics would have made Aristotle blush. They are pure Tudor: cold-blooded, relentless, selfish, calculating. How anyone ever called him the "Gentle" Spenser passes understanding.

His Justice is not tempered by Mercy; his Courage knows no warmth of Chivalry; his Right is the right of Might.

You do not need to read his ghastly "View of the State of Ireland"—the Faery Queen is full of revolting brutalities. Talus with his iron flail is Spenser in the judgment-seat, and even his Red Cross Knight has no bowels of compassion.

Finally, when he adds his spurious archaisms to his prodigious allegory he becomes intolerable. He does not use old words, he coins them. Most of them belong to no known period of English as ever spoken—or spelled. They are the rococo and fustian manufacture of his Wardour Street workshop. They are faked. He is the forerunner of "Ye Olde Tea-shoppe," and even the fact that he provides the ingenious Torquemada with exasperating clues shall not save him.

It is time he were debunked. I may continue to re-read his Prothalamium, for he does make Thames run softly there (though he must spell her "Thammes"!) and I may dip into the Shepherd's Calendar, which has some dew of spontaneity—but the Faery Queen, with its false ethics, its false archaisms, its beastliness and its pretentiousness, you may have to make newspaper pulp with.

WILLIAM BLISS

SECOND PRIZE (2)

WORDSWORTH

I loathe Wordsworth intensely for his bourgeois morality and irritating tenderness: he epitomises all that is most rotten in the state of poetry: the weak sentimentality, the insincere "appreciation" of natural objects, and the false simplicity that are the trade-marks of

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the fake poet. I blame on him the worse slobberings of the Georgian school and the vapid mincings of the Poetry Review's cat-loving coterie, all the insipid poetry of "good taste." "A sight so *touching* in its majesty." He speaks polite drawing-room conversation as though it were deadly serious. He is expert at stating the ridiculous pseudo-sublimely—"Earth has not anything to show more fair." His heritage damns him.

NICHOLAS MOORE

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 244.—THE PRICE OF ADMIRALTY

"This is the position," said the First Sea Lord. "Bolonia is spending, on new construction, a round sum of twelve million eagles. We—thanks to our pacifists and Bolshies—have a meagre eight million eagles with which to combat this expenditure. And the problem is, gentlemen: how do we lay out our money?"

The Second Sea Lord scratched his nose. "How," he asked, "is Bolonia laying out hers?"

The First Sea Lord turned inquiringly to Admiral Gazebo-Golosh.

"We don't know," said Gazebo-Golosh. "Construction is taking place in Bolonia's underground dockyard. Several of our spies have got in; but none has ever got out. All I can tell you is that the twelve million eagles will all be spent on ships—but whether on battleships, cruisers, destroyers or submarines, it is impossible to conjecture. Except for this. We may take it as certain that there will be at least one battleship."

"Then what we have to do," said the Second Sea Lord, "is to be prepared for any contingency within the ambit of what Gazebo-Golosh has told us?"

"That's right," said the First Sea Lord. "We also shall build ships—whatever selection of ships has the best all-round value in defence. And, by the way, our costs are approximately equal to those incurred by the Bolonians. Where they can build three battleships, we can only build two; and so on."

"The real question," said the Second Sea Lord, "is this. How are we to assess the value in defence of ships of different kinds?"

The First Sea Lord smiled. "Ah!" he said, "there, at least, we have the benefit of scientific research. Here is Professor Kukku's table." And he distributed copies as under:

	Battleship	Cruiser	Destroyer	Sub-marine
Battleship versus	16	14	4	2
Cruiser ,,	12	7	5	3
Destroyer ,,	6	4	3	1
Submarine ,,	2	1	1	2

Gazebo-Golosh screwed his monocle into his eye. "What do the figures represent?"

"Comparative units of defensive capacity. Thus a cruiser, against an enemy battleship, has three-quarters of the value of a battleship; against a cruiser, it has only half the value of a battleship. On the other hand, against a destroyer or submarine, a cruiser is worth more than a battleship. A submarine has next to no value against a cruiser, but is worth just as much as a battleship against another submarine. And so on."

"Grand," said Gazebo-Golosh. All we have to do then is to send for Kukku and tell him to answer our problem."

"Alas, no!" said the First Sea Lord. "We must work that out for ourselves. We are not allowed to disclose to Kukku the comparative figures of expenditure."

How should the eight million eagles be invested?

PROBLEMS 241, 242

Caliban is away. The solutions of Problems 241, 242 will be published next week and of 243, 244 the following week.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

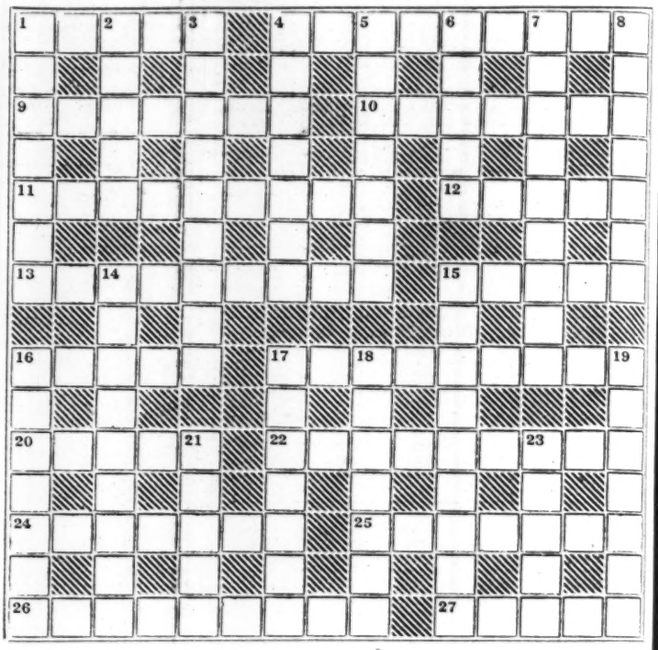
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 391

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Mrs. T. J. Rees, 30 Eaton Crescent, Swansea

ACROSS

1. Took a part. (5)
4. This was not Edgar Wallace's mangle. (9)
9. Our seas are so differently constituted. (7)
10. He who does might be called an overworker. (7)
11. Costly catalogue for customary use. (9)
12. The vanquished are soft enough to. (5)
13. Such a sweet is always lumpy. (9)
15. Often constitute payment for training. (5)
16. This trading firm could of course never quite get it across. (5)
17. The beaten opponent goes into this heading. (9)
20. Obviously they need to be presentable. (5)
22. The N. of N.B. (9)
24. His stock naturally increases and grows bigger. (7)
25. Tell the Vicar not to have it inside. (7)
26. His name should be on everything posted. (9)
27. Need you be so variable? (5)

DOWN

1. An operative tool. (7)
2. His job is a washout as a rule in India. (5)
3. How the chemist does without things. (9)
4. A palatable job. (7)
5. He helps to make a popular choice. (7)
6. In elfin fashion? (5)
7. Pictorial necessity for a good reception. (9)
8. Desires a change. (7)
14. The bridge devil? (9)
15. Journalist who would have saved a knight of the tourney some expense. (9)
16. Involves discovery of the unknown quantitively. (7)
17. Here, take the lettuce round. (7)
18. A cogent relative. (7)
19. We get sore after tea. (7)
21. Go to crab it as it were. (5)
23. Ned is about to get up. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

M	U	S	I	C	A	L	E	V	E	N	I	N	G	S
I	■	N	■	L	■	I	■	I	■	O	■	O	■	E
S	E	R	P	E	N	T	■	V	E	N	T	U	R	E
S	■	E	■	A	■	U	■	A	■	S	■	M	■	D
M	O	V	I	N	G	P	I	C	T	U	R	E	S	■
U	■	A	■	■	■	■	I	■	I	■	N	■	D	■
F	A	C	E	T	T	E	■	O	A	T	C	A	K	E
F	■	■	■	U	■	A	■	U	■	E	■	■	■	A
E	M	P	E	R	O	R	■	S	E	D	U	C	E	D
T	■	R	■	N	■	T	■	■	■	■	■	R	■	L
■	P	A	R	I	S	H	M	A	G	A	Z	I	N	E
T	■	I	■	P	■	B	■	C	■	D	■	M	■	T
H	O	R	A	T	I	O	■	T	R	A	N	S	I	T
U	■	I	■	O	■	R	■	U	■	I	■	O	■	E
S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G	P	A	R	T	N	E	R

FOR SALE, TO LET AND WANTED

OVERLOOKING Parliament Fields, excellent modern unfurnished flat to let. Self-contained, two rooms and lounge-hall, bathroom and fully equipped kitchen, electric throughout, central heating and constant hot water included. £2 15s. a week. Apply Box 939, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

YELLOW SANDS, Harlyn Bay, Padstow, N. Cornwall. Close Trevose Golf Links. Highly recommended and remunerative high-class Guest House for sale as a going concern: 3 rec., 18 bed., 4 lav., 2 bath., h. and c., safe bathing, elec. light. Magnificent scenery. Excellent clientele. Five lock-up garages. Giving up for health reasons. Proprietor.

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16 DOUGHTY ST., W.C.1. Furnished room, ground floor, two unfurnished rooms, top floor. Every convenience. Highest refs. required. ROWAN. HOL. 7535.

CARAVAN, 2 gns. week. Beautiful site. Brathayfell, Ambleside.

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ATTIC flat furnished, 3 rooms, plate, linen. Westminster. 17s. 6d. Box 969, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

PICCADILLY: small top-floor flat to let furnished 6 months from end September. 2 rooms and bath, service if required, electric cooker. South aspect, roof garden. Quiet, would suit writer (sleep 2). Box 967, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

LADY doctor wishes to let to business or professional woman large parquet-floored unfurnished bed-sitting room. Use of kitchen and bath. 1d. from Westminster Bridge. Box 966, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

EXCEPTIONALLY attractive bachelor flat to let, fine modern furniture, roof garden. Quiet, central. Apply 40 Buckingham Palace Road. Victoria 5943.

CHARGES FOR SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

DETAILS of rates for single or a series of insertions will be found on p. 355 of this issue.

Notice to Readers who replied to Box No. 960.

"THE Organising Committee of an important Art Movement wish to enlist the help of a responsible person with a flair for publicity. Remunerative. Box 960."

We are informed by a reader who replied to the above advertisement, which was published in last week's "New Statesman and Nation," that he has received in response to his application a communication from "The Faculty of Criticism" (signed by H. Hargreaves, Secretary) which was the subject of a cautionary note in our issue of August 14th. Any reader who replied to this advertisement may obtain, on application to the Manager, a copy of our comment on "The Book Censorship Board" and "The Faculty of Criticism," published on August 14th.

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION,
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High Holborn,
W.C.1.

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HAMPSTEAD, furnished bed-sitting room in lady's modern flat, near 24, 231 buses. Suit student or business woman. Write BM/NDGJ, W.C.1.

UNIVERSITY Lecturer wants large unfurnished room, Bloomsbury, or within five minutes' walk London School of Economics. Give full particulars. Box 972, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

TRAMP SHIPPING SHARES AND THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY—
U.K. AND ARGENTINE TRUST

WAR news paralysed the stock markets this week. Last week the warning speech made by Lord Craigmyle, better known as Mr. Alexander Shaw, chairman of the P. & O., was taken seriously enough to depress the market in shipping shares. Lord Craigmyle was protesting against the greatly increased cost of shipbuilding, which was causing shipowners to cancel orders for new tonnage, and went on to say that the liner companies, bound by "conference" rates fixed for a considerable period, were often prevented from raising freights to meet the increased cost of wages, stores, fuel, and repairs. In some companies with which he was connected, not only had increased costs to be borne without any rise in freights, but gross earnings had actually fallen off, so that the net profits this year would fall below those of the previous year.

Shipowners, like farmers, are notorious grumblers, but I welcome this timely warning, for I have always favoured in these notes the shares of the tramp lines rather than of the liner companies. Tramp freights rise or fall with the demand for cargo space and are not fixed for periods ahead. The index of tramp freights has risen from an average of 90.79 for 1936 to 137.76 for July, 1937. The tramp shipping shares I favour are Court, King, France Fenwick and Reardon Smith, all small companies whose shares do not command free markets. Court has 24 ships of which half are under 10 years old. King has 15 of which 9 are about 9 or 10 years old. Of the 24 ships of France Fenwick, which carries coal from the north-east coast to London and the Continent, 13 were built in 1929 or after. Reardon Smith has 22 of which 13 are around 10 years old and only 4 were built before 1922. Thus, all four companies are fairly well off in respect of up-to-date tonnage. France Fenwick alone has a steady dividend record, for it has a large interest in Yorkshire Amalgamated Collieries from which increasing dividends may now be expected.

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Mansion House 5467

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Here are the present market prices and the estimated earnings' yields :

	1936 Div. %.	1937 Est. Earnings %.	Price.	Est. Earnings Yield %.
Court 6/8 ..	5 (1937 int.)	48	26/3	£12 4 0
France Fenwick £1 ..	5	20	33/6	£11 18 9
King Line £1 ..	Nil	32	32/6	£19 13 9
Reardon Smith 10/- ..	6¼ tax free	24	25/1½	£9 11 0

* * *

It is an ill wind which cannot be exploited on the Stock Exchange, and the complaints which are heard from shipowners and motor manufacturers about increased costs should lead the intelligent investor to consider coal mining shares. The following table reveals that it is the export and industrial coals (as opposed to the domestic) which have enjoyed the biggest rise in prices this year :

AVERAGE COAL PRICES IN SHILLINGS PER TON.

	S. Wales.	Durham	Yorkshire.	Nottingham.
1936 Average ..	18.25	14.67	19.4	21.0
June, 1937 ..	25.75	23.00	21.4	20.0

This suggests that companies like Powell Duffryn (Wales) and Horden and Bearpark (Durham) are now making the highest rates of profit. All three companies possess coke oven plants and are benefiting from the extraordinary rise in coke prices. Bearpark is a small company (and a very restricted market) with a bad dividend record, but it has raised its interim dividend from 2 per cent. to 5 per cent. and should pay 10 per cent. for the year. Horden I have already mentioned in a recent note, the price then being 34*s.* 9*d.* Powell Duffryn, since its amalgamation with Welsh Associated Collieries, is the largest coal-producing company in this country. Its output capacity is in excess of 20 million tons a year and its present output around 11½ million tons. It paid a dividend of 7 per cent. for the year to March, 1937, and should increase its distribution this year to 10 per cent. The next table fixes the present market prices and estimated dividend yields of these companies :

	1936 Div. %.	1937 Est. Div. %.	Price.	Est. Div. Yield %.
Bearpark £1	5	10	29/3	£6 16 9
Horden Collieries £1 ..	7½	9	37/-	£4 17 3
Powell Duffryn £1 Stk. ..	6	7†	26/6	£5 5 9

† Actual.

* * *

The "B" Certificates of the United Kingdom and Argentine Trust are an interesting stock, since the security is a mixture of British and Argentine Government Bonds. The Trust holds £1,000,000 4 per cent. Argentine (Roca) Bonds, and £750,000 3 per cent. Conversion Loan and has issued against them £500,000 "A" Certificates, £350,000 5½ per cent. "B" Certificates and £750,000 "C" Certificates.

At the present time the "A" Certificates are covered wholly by the holding of 3 per cent. Conversion Loan both as to interest and capital, while the "B" Certificates are covered as to 71 per cent. by capital, ½ per cent. of the interest being derived from the 3 per cent. Conversion Loan and the balance of 5 per cent. from the interest on the Argentine Government Bonds. The "C" Certificates must be regarded at the present time as purely an Argentine Government security. Thus the "B" Certificates can be regarded as a mixture of a British Government ½ per cent. Bond redeemable at 71 and an Argentine Government 5 per cent. Bond redeemable at 29. Valuation of the Certificates on the basis of the appropriate British Government and Argentine Government rates of interest presents an interesting problem, and it may be of value to some of our readers if the figures are brought up to date.

In the following table we give the value of the Certificates on the basis of a rate of interest of 3⅛ per cent. for the British portion of the security and for rates of interest of 5 per cent. and 4½ per cent. for the Argentine portion. In this table income tax is ignored :

	British Govt. 3⅛% Argentine Government 5%	4½%
Value of U.K. and Arg. "B" Certs. ..	114.4	116.7

The "B" Certificates can be bought at 114½, the expenses of purchase being approximately equivalent to the net interest accrued, to yield £4 16*s.* 6*d.* per cent. flat and £4 to redemption. Thus the purchaser who looks only to the gross yield and is taxed on profits may regard this as a very satisfactory investment, since approximately half of his money is invested in a medium-dated British Government security to yield 3⅛ per cent. and the other half in a medium-dated Argentine Bond to yield 5 per cent.

Company Meeting

ISMAY INDUSTRIES

MR. JOHN ISMAY'S ADDRESS

FURTHER PROGRESS

THE second ordinary general meeting of Ismay Industries, Limited, was held on Thursday, August 26th, at Southern House, Cannon Street, London, E.C.

Mr. John Ismay (chairman and managing director) said: During the year under review we increased our capital by an issue of ordinary shares at 7*s.* 6*d.* per share. Our total interests in subsidiary and associated companies come to approximately £1,050,000 against our issued capital of £862,000, and we propose to adjust the capital position by making an issue of shares later in the year.

Our interests are divided into two main groups, the lighting industry and the other electrical activities. In the lighting industry we have roughly £450,000 invested, from which we received an income of £57,000. The other interests stand in our books at £600,000. Most of them have progressed quite satisfactorily. Our hire-purchase Corporation had a largely increased turnover and their profits will be substantial. The only disappointing one of our interests is the refrigerator business, but the gas refrigerator which we are putting on the market will, we hope, produce substantial results.

The dividend of 6 per cent. which we are paying for the year under review has, I understand, caused a little disappointment, but in my opinion the report is really a very satisfactory one. Some criticism has been expressed about our issuing shares at 7*s.* 6*d.* each in December last, but, considering the real value of our two groups of interests—the dividend-producing one in the lamp trade and the non-dividend-producing one in the other activities—there is no doubt in my mind that the equity in each group would represent at least 5*s.* a share. Therefore, taking the two together, how can one say that they could be worth less than 7*s.* 6*d.* a share? We are quite confident that we shall have no trouble in maintaining the present dividend of 6 per cent., even on any increase of capital which we may make this year.

The electrical industry is still in its infancy, and I am sure that we shall get our share of the increasing trade. Our lamp business has possibilities for increased profits in the future, and I am convinced that in time our return from our other interests will be at least equal to that which we are at present obtaining from our electric lamps.

The report was unanimously adopted.

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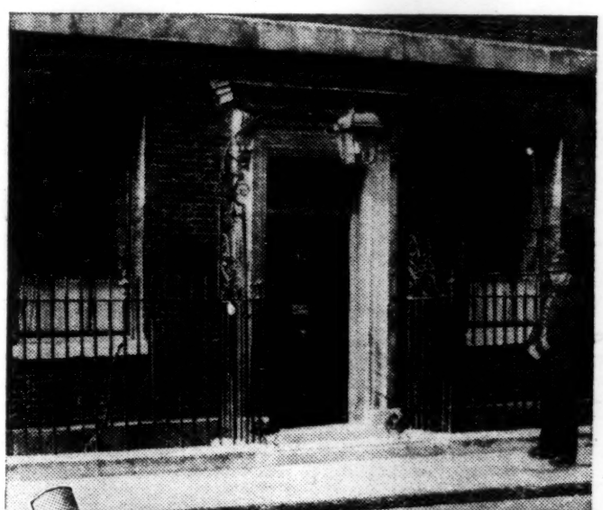

NOTABLE NUMBERS

10 DOWNING STREET — for many years the official residence of the Prime Ministers of England. Here, just off Whitehall, lived Pitt, Lord Grey, Lord Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel and others.

Note also, in this connection, another famous number—Player's No. 3. Mellowness, distinction of flavour and aroma have long been the characteristics of this finer quality cigarette.

PLAIN OR CORK TIPS Special Moisture-proof wrapping ensures Player's No. 3 being always in good condition.

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